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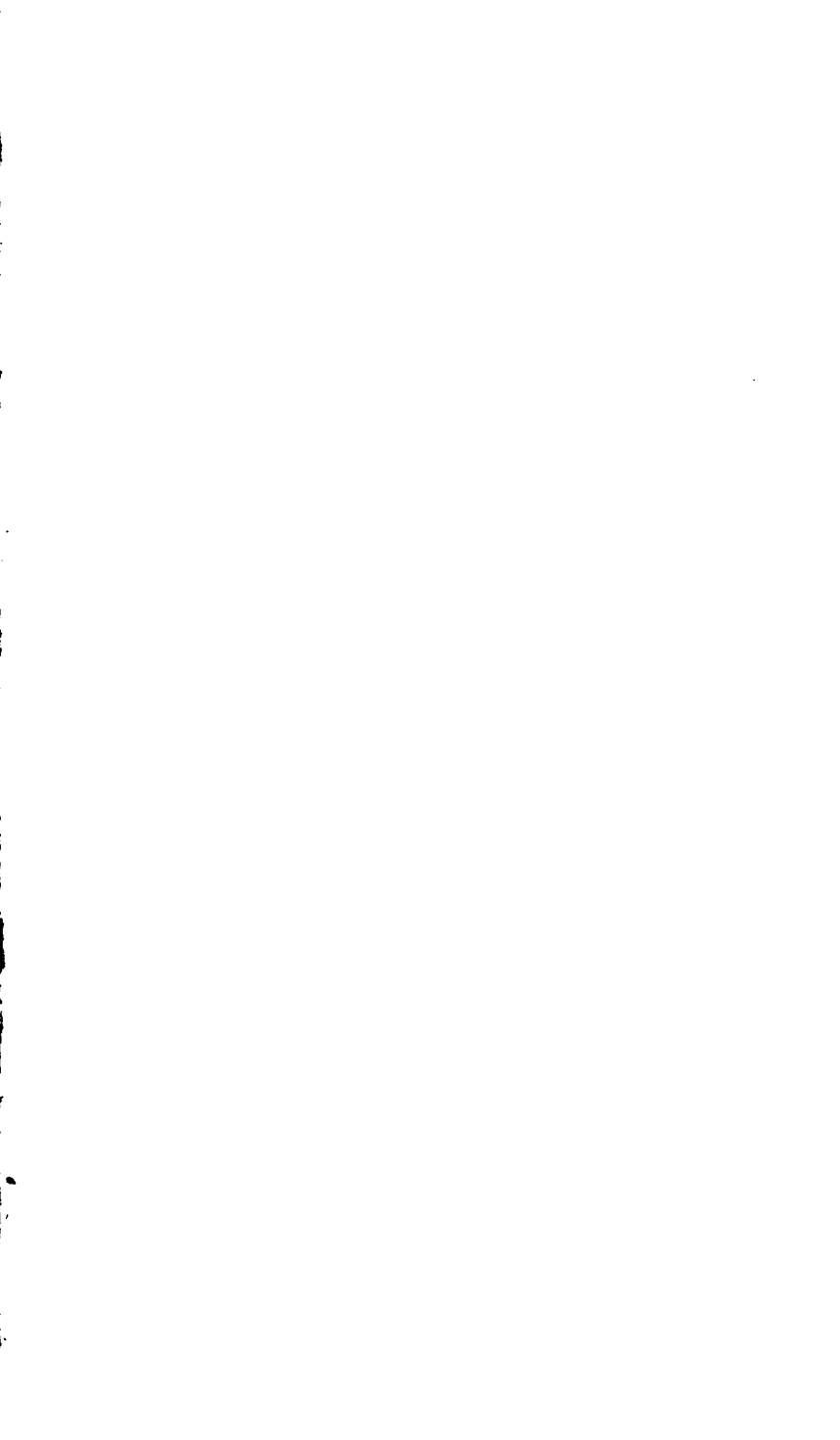
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LETTERS

FROM

THE KINGDOM OF KERRY

IN

THE YEAR 1845.

Fisher / Mrs. Lydia Jane Fisher

Dear Erin ! how sweetly thy green bosom rises,
An emerald set in the ring of the sea ;
Each blade of thy meadows my faithful heart prizes,
Thou queen of the west ! the world's cush-la-machree.—Cwran.

DUBLIN :

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1847.

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From the
Estate of Mrs. Asa Gray,
through the
Gray Herbarium

Webb and Chapman, Printers, Dublin.

Addressed and Dedicated

TO

THE BEST SISTER, THE BEST AUNT, AND THE BEST WIFE

IN

THE WHOLE WORLD.

P R E F A C E.

THE reader must not expect to find, in the following pages, any reference to the present distressed state of those parts of Ireland which they attempt to describe. When I concluded these letters, it was far from entering into my mind that such aggravation of their poverty and misery impended over the primitive people I had so recently visited. When we turned from their mountain land, their wants were many and their privations great; we deemed them sunk in the lowest depth of poverty. Alas! lower deeps still were to be fathomed by them. The potato-crop was blighted; their staff of life was destroyed, and we now behold the awful result.

My heart sinks within me as I picture their present situation, encompassed by their desolate mountains, buried in their barren wilds. What have they now to barter? what can they offer for the bare means of subsistence? and even if they were able to purchase, where can they procure the food? Famine, Disease, and Death stalk through the country, and how can the means of life be carried in sufficient quantities into those rugged and dreary wastes? Meanwhile, thousands upon thousands are being swept off the face of the earth. May God in his infinite mercy relieve the sorrows of my stricken country!



CONTENTS.

LETTER I.

Sail down the Shannon from Limerick to Tarbert—Listowel—Siege and Surrender of Listowel Castle—Mausoleum of the last Earl of Kerry—Banmore—Round Tower of Rattoo—The leg of a mountain—Contrast between the Limerick Lassies and the Kerry Damsels—A Kerry Pocket-handkerchief—Tralee—The Denny Family—Murder of Sir Henry Danvers. 3

LETTER II.

Tralee Spa—A Theory about Cromwell, which comes to nothing—The bridge of Castlemaine, "the oldest in Ireland"—Its history—Miltown—The Lakes of Carragh—Glenbegh—Dinner in a Shebeen-house—A Postmaster made happy—Magnificent Scenery of Dan's Country—Ingliš's eulogium upon it—A Convent in the Wilderness—O'Connell's eloquence accounted for—The Author turns Repealer, but recants immediately—The Post-boy warbles his wood notes wild, and speaks French—Smith's description of this mountain pass—Travellers turned poets perforce—Strange Device for keeping French privateers off the coast—O'Connell's tenantry. 11

LETTER III.

Valencia Island—Cliffs of Brey Head and Fohilly—Valencia Harbour—The Knight of Kerry—Kerry Cattle—The Valencia Slate-quarries—The Natives not prepared for the accommodation of Tourists—Voyage of Discovery in the Harbour—Caus-Clogher Cave—a Sister of Grauna-wale—Longevity of the Natives—Their Courtesy—Consumption unknown in Valencia—Irish Melody—A Vessel in Distress—Eulogium on Mrs. Roper's Hotel—Attractions of Valencia. 20

LETTER IV.

Consolation for the sea-sick—Arrival at Dingle—A Giantess—Female Beauty at a premium, Middle-aged Women invisible, and Gentlemen unattractive in Dingle—An Uncomfortable Churchyard—The *lightest* Water in the World—Smith's Historical Sketch of Dingle and its Ancient Monuments. 27

LETTER V.

A Wet Day at Dingle—The Funeral of a Convert—Frequency of Intemperance—Cheapness of Provisions—Burnham, the seat of Lord Ventry—Relic of the Knights Templar—Battle of Ventry, which lasted 366 days—Hanmer's Account of it—The Basket Islands. . . 35

LETTER VI.

An Excursion—Splendid Equipage—Legend of St. Brandon—Curious Architectural Remains—St. Brandon's House—The greatest Cow that ever was seen—An Inquisitive Old Lady—Aboriginal Edifice—Smith's description of it—Gallerus Castle. 45

LETTER VII.

Relentings towards Dingle—A feat of Fion-ma-Coul's men on their way to the Battle of Ventry—Rathanane Castle—The Sailor's Grave—Bally-Ferritur—Ferritur's Castle demolished by a gale from the Atlantic—The Three Sisters—Glorious Prospect from Sybil Head—A Port in a Storm—Dearmid's Bed—Fort-del-Ore and its Legend—Innis Tuskar—Shipwreck of "Our Lady of the Rosary," a Vessel of the Spanish Armada—Scraps of Knowledge. 54

LETTER VIII.

Evening Prospect near Dingle—Nancy Brown's Parlour—Two Scriptural Similes—The Holy Stone of Dingle—Manners and Customs of the Natives—Denis of Dingle—John Gilpin beaten hollow by a Kerry Cavalier—Contrast between the Condition of the English and the Irish Peasantry—The Author's Loyalty to the Land of Potatoes. . . 60

LETTER IX.

A welcome Invitation—Arrival at Foildarrig—View from the Windows—The Strand of Inch—The Kerry Road—Glen Inch—Glenagalt, or The Madman's Glen—Cahirconrigh—An old Irish Legend. . . 67

LETTER X.

Annascall Lake—Minard Castle—A Gossip in the Wilderness—A Word about Limpets—The Aborigines of Dunquin—Excursion to Connor Hill—Saint Brandon's Well—Magnificent Coast Scenery—Scissors a Substitute for a Switch—Last Day at Foildarrig. 75

LETTER XI.

Farewell to Foildarrig—Visit to a Kerry Ornithologist's Museum—A Custom peculiar to Kerry Funerals—Arrival at Cloghereen—Oh that we had come yesterday!—Ponderings on the Enchanting Scenery of Killarney—St. Finian's Oratory, and Facts about St. Finian—A modern Legend of Innisfallen—Laking, Climbing, and Romancing—Lord Kenmare's Private Pleasure Grounds—Farewell to Killarney. 85

LETTER XII.

The New Road from Killarney to Kenmare, the Irish Simplon—The Marquess of Lansdowne the Road-making Napoleon of Kerry—The Waterfall of Adrigal the Irish Staubach—The Incomparable Killarney versus the Matchless Glengariff—Cromwell's Bridge—A Brave Little Brother—Return to Cloghereen—Conclusion. 93



LETTERS FROM THE KINGDOM OF KERRY.

LETTER I.

Sail down the Shannon from Limerick to Tarbert—Listowel—Siege and Surrender of Listowel Castle—Mausoleum of “the last Earl of Kerry”—Banmore—Round Tower of Rattoo—The leg of a mountain—Contrast between the Limerick Lasses and the Kerry Damsels—A Kerry Pocket-handkerchief—Tralee—The Denny Family—Murder of Sir Henry Danvers.

Tralee, July, 1845.

My dear sister,

Here we are in “distant Tralee,” and as I promised you a full and true account of our exploratory tour in our native land, I forthwith begin, and what is more, begin at the beginning.

We left “the city of the violated treaty,” as it is now the fashion to style our ancient city, (“*Urbs antiqua fuit*”) on a sunny morning, when the Shannon looked his very best, sparkling and dancing, and giving a pleasant welcome to the steamer on her way. For the hundredth time at least, we looked back, and admired the effect of the hoary old cathedral tower, looking down upon the busy town, grave and sad, backed by the round bald-headed Keeper. Once again we remarked the beauty of the lights and shadows on the gentle hills of Clare, and turned to note the waving woods of Tervoe, with the storied ruin of Carrigo-gunnel rising above them, that beautiful old castle, whose rock-foundation could not save it from destruction. Soon came in view, on the Clare side, Cratloe-woods house, sitting

cozily by the river side, with the ivied tower and deep groves behind, and then the stately Bunratty, opposite to which are Mellon, Ringmoylan and Castletown. The tributary Mague from Adare, and the Fergus from Clare, came to swell our king of rivers, and pay homage to his power. I thought sadly of days gone by, as we hustled past "green Ringmoylan's leafy wood," and still more when we reached Loughill, and I could see that sweet home which he, the gifted and the good, pointed out to me fifteen years ago. Still does Fairy Lawn look out upon his "own beloved river," and he lies cold and silent as the clod of the valley !*

Glin and its knightly castle, Mount Trenchard, and Knock Patrick, which has the ruins of a church and a burying-ground on its summit, claim each its own peculiar interest. At length Cahircon, rich in foliage, on one side, and Foynes on the other, appear to enclose the river in a verdant embrace, and give to it the character of a mighty lake. Then loomed in sight the "grey gnomon of the past," the round tower on Scatterry Island, and suddenly we wheeled and splashed into Tarbert Bay.

I have thus minutely traced this route, to revive in your memory our many trips to Kilkee, when, surrounded by the infant band, we were wont to seek health in the breezes of the Atlantic. Alas ! alas ! for how many of the rosy group did we seek it in vain !

And now I will make no further allusion, if I can help it, to by-gone days of our time ; to those of our country it will be impossible not to refer, for at every step into the " Kingdom of Kerry," we stumble upon historical recollections, and these are, to Irish hearts, of thrilling interest.

From Tarbert to Listowel the country is bleak enough : the first inbreak of beauty is the Knight of Kerry's place, Ballinruddery, which is indeed lovely ; a thickly-wooded glen, with a fine river, the Feale, running through it.

Listowel is a pretty town ; in Smith's time it was called "a

* The late Gerald Griffin, Esq., author of "The Collegians," &c.

village," for he says in his charming History of Kerry, "the gentlemen of this part of the country have, by a subscription, caused a new road to be made from the Shannon to the village of Listowel, which will be of great service to the people of this barony, who formerly had not a tolerable good road through it, except that leading along the shores of that river and the sea, and across the river Cashen, by a ferry; whereby it was, in the winter season, and bad weather, almost barred of all communication with the rest of the country." This was published in 1756.

Listowel has now a clean inn, an interesting ruined castle with an imposing portcullis, which belonged to the Lords of Kerry; a commodious chapel, partly clothed in ivy, and a neat church: but this last stands in the centre of the market-place, which struck me as being ill-chosen; for if the money-changers are not in the temple, they are close to it.

In the "Pacata Hibernia" is the following account of the siege and surrender of Listowel castle:—"Sir Charles Wilmot knowing that Fitz-Maurice, the Lord of Lixnaw, had onely one castle, called Listoell, wherein to shelter himselfe, finding no other meanes to compasse the same, determined to besiege it, and intimated so much to the President by his letters, requesting his advice and allowance therein, who returned answer, That he desired nothing more than to have that Castle gotten for the Queene, and for the manner, left the managing thereof wholly to his discretion. He sate downe before it upon the fifth of November, attempting to get it by a myne; in the which he wrought five or six days, and brought it underneath the Castle wall, being ready to make a bed for the placing of the powder. Suddainely the spring brake forth in such abundance, as that work became fruitlesse: thereupon new ground was sought, which proved good, the foundation of the Castle was undermined, as farre as the middest of the seller, which the Ward perceiving, made humble suit to be permitted to depart with their lives, which Sir Charles absolutely refused; but if they would simply render themselves,

“ the Castle, and all things in it to his discretion, hee would
“ then stay further proceeding in his worke, otherwise they
“ might look in very few hours to bee blowen up. The Ward,
“ which were eighteen in number, came forth, and upon their
“ knees submitted themselves unto him, whom hee caused to
“ bee apprehended ; the women and small children hee suffered
“ to depart, of the weaponed men hee hanged nine, so many of
“ ours being lost at the siege, which continued more than three
“ weekes ; the residue hee detained, until hee had acquainted
“ the President with all these accidents, who gave present order
“ for the execution of the rest ; for they had beene all of them
“ formerly protected, except one Sir Dermond Mac Brodie, a
“ priest, whose life was saved upon this occasion : It fortun'd
“ that within this Castle, at the rendering thereof, there was,
“ unknown to Sir Charles, the Lord of Lixnaw's eldest sonne,
“ being a child of five yeares of age ; the Warders, upon their
“ coming forth, disarrayed this child of all his clothes, and hav-
“ ing besmeared his face with dust and dirt, committed him to
“ an old woman, who bringing the infant naked and disfigured
“ at her backe, conveyed him away without suspition. Sir
“ Charles, receiving advertisement of this escape, sent out some
“ Souldiers, and some Provincials, (whom he most trusted) for
“ the recoverie of him, but in vaine, they all returned with lost
“ labour : at last hee bethought himselfe, that peradventure
“ some of the prisoners could direct him in his pursuit, and
“ questioning the Priest concerning the child, hee answered him
“ that hee could best resolve him, for that himselfe had given
“ direction to the woman where shee should bestow the child,
“ till shee might deliver him to his father : ‘ Why, then,’ saith
“ Sir Charles, ‘ will you not conduct mee to him ? Know you
“ not, that it is in my power to hang you or to save you ? Yes,
“ and I assure you, if you will not guide mee to the place where
“ hee lieth hidden, I will cause you to be instantly hanged.’ The
“ Priest answered, that it was ‘ all one to him, whether hee dyed
“ this day, or to-morrow, yet if hee might have his word, for the
“ sparing of his own life, and the childe's, hee would reveale his

"knowledge; otherways the Governoure might doe his pleasure.' Sir Charles, though very unwilling to grant the Priest his life, yet the earnest desire hee had to gett the child into his hands, caused him to agree thereto. The Priest, being put into a hand-locke, is sent with a Captaine, and a good guard of Souldiers about this businese, who guided them to a wood sixe miles from the Castle, by reason of thick bryers and thornes almost unpassible, in the midst whereof there is a hollow cave within the ground, not much unlike by description to Cacus his denne, or the mouth of Avernus, in which desolate place they found that old woman, and this young child, whom they brought to the Governour, and the Priest and childe were shortly after sent to the President."

The view, after leaving Listowel, on each side of the road is cultivated and pretty, although the houses of the gentry are few and far between, and the cabins of the peasantry are wretched. We could not learn the purpose of a curious pillar which stands in a field, a short way from the town; so we conjectured it was established as a type of Lot's wife, to terrify the Listowel dames from persisting in having their own way, and indulging in a destructive curiosity.

Farther on, in the distance to the right, we were shown the monument of "the last Earl of Kerry;" not the Marquis of Lansdowne's eldest son, he who, in the bloom of youth and newly-wedded happiness, rich in promise to his father's tenantry, and deeply deplored, was early called away,—but the last earl of the title ere it merged in that of Lansdowne. This mausoleum is erected on a mount; it is of a circular form, resting on a square base, and terminating in a dome, from which an extensive view of the surrounding country is obtained, and it looks well itself in the landscape. We were told it was rifled of its lead during the rebellion of 1798.

After some miles we reached the romantic Banmore, which is "in law," and so is deserted and going to decay. The lust of gain prevents either party from having possession of this fair spot. Ere we came to Banmore we halted on a hill to look

back,—the winding river with its handsome bridge, the solitary pillar, the church steeple, the ivy-covered chapel with its stone cross, and the old castle, combined to make Listowel a place to rest on the memory. The country is flat, but cultivated, yet is the soil but poor,—for Ireland.

Our driver was very communicative, and pointed out to our notice every object we were bound to admire; amongst others, “the only perfect round tower in Kerry,” called Rattoo; and he spelled the name for us, thus giving a pleasing proof of the Kerry learning, of which we had heard so much. Rattoo stands alone now in the wide plain; at least so it appeared to us, for we could see no remains of the abbey and castle which were once its neighbours. We always find “the round towers of other days” thus accompanied. There was one at Ardfort, near the ancient cathedral of St. Brandon, but it fell to the ground nearly half a century since.

R. will like to hear that the crops look promising. Oats the principal grain; indeed I only saw two or three fields of wheat between Tarbert and Listowel; the potatoes look well, and also the flax, except that it is very short. How prettily its tender green and blue flower contrast with the golden oats, the brown meadows, and the dark, deep green of the potato—all uniting to make the grand mosaic of Nature peculiarly beautiful at this season.

The foxglove, the heath, and the bog myrtle refreshed our senses, and gave us promise of mountain scenery: it soon broke on our delighted eyes, and oh! such mountains! they made my heart jump. The day had become misty soon after we left the steamer, and we feared we should not have this pleasure during our drive; but M. at last announced Brandon Head, by crying out, “Oh! there’s the leg of a mountain.” Sure enough—there he stood with his foot in the ocean, and his forehead in mist; we saw no more of him than “the leg.”

Already we trace the difference between our fair county-women—“the Limerick lasses,” and “the Kerry damsels.” Here they are short, swarthy, and plain, save that they have redeem-

ing eyes, teeth, and hair ; the latter a jet black, and the eyes long-shaped, of the same colour, or deep blue, with black lashes.

I write at the tea-table in a comfortable hotel, Mr. Walpole's. We have excellent tea, and three cakes—only three!!! One a-piece for the ladies. M. says they are "scatter-brained plum cakes," the fruit is so scarce in them. She and N. are sitting at the window, and have just told me of a new style of pocket-handkerchief, they suppose universal in Kerry, which one of the lords of the creation has just used—a wisp of hay.

Tralee is a good sized town, encompassed by mountains, which to our lowland eyes possess a peculiar charm. Sir Edward Denny has portioned off from his domain a public walk for the inhabitants ; it is excellently kept, and the preservation of the shrubs and plants speaks well for the people. I am sure if the Irish peasantry were treated less like mischievous savages, such would generally be the result of so kind an indulgence. This walk commands a magnificent view, and being separated from the rest of the domain only by an iron paling, the fine trees and verdant herbage give an additional pleasure and grace. We walked through the town, and with the exception of one nice street, found it like most other Irish towns,—not very clean. The court-house is a handsome building ; we regretted that the paling was not like that which surrounds the court-house at Carlow, which is formed of iron bars, tied in bundles, and made in imitation of the fasces of the Roman lictors,—very pretty, and very appropriate.

"Tralee or Traly was antiently wrote Traleigh, i. e. the strand of the river Leigh, which is a small rivulet that emptieth itself at the bottom of this bay, and in time of floods is often greatly swollen."—*Smith's Hist.* It is about a mile from the sea, and at Blennerville there are lodges for bathers. Smith speaks of one castle remaining out of four, which once distinguished this town, but we did not see any remains of it. The Denny family, or rather one of that name, Sir Edward Denny, came to Ireland in Queen Elizabeth's reign. He got a grant of six thousand acres for £100 per annum crown rent, together with the Castle of Tralee, which had been the chief seat of the

Earl of Desmond. There is such an interesting little sketch of the family in Smith's History of Ireland, that I must extract some of it:—"The first of this antient family came to England "with the Conqueror from Normandy, in which Kingdom they "flourished until the reign of Queen Elizabeth
 "Sir Edward Denny, Knt., was the second son of Sir Anthony "Denny, of Waltham Abbey, in Herefordshire, Knt., to whom "King Henry the 8th bequeathed a legacy of £300.
 "Beside this, King Henry nominated him one of his executors, "and one of the guardians to his son King Edward the 6th, and "left the sum of £200 to his brother, Sir Thomas Denny, Knt., "all which shewed that he and his family were in great favour "with that prince. Sir Anthony's eldest son, Henry, had issue, "Sir Edward Denny, Knt., who was created Baron of Waltham, "and called up by writ to the House of Peers in England, by "King James the first, and who died without issue. Sir Edward, Knt., his uncle, died May 12th, 1599, as appears by the "following epitaph in Waltham Abbey, Herefordshire :

"Learn, curious Reader, ere you pass,
 "What once Sir Edward Denny was,
 "A courtier of the chamber,
 "A soldier of the field,
 "Whose tongue could never flatter,
 "Whose heart could never yield."
 "May 12, 1599."

"In this castle of Tralee was committed the inhuman murder "of Sir Henry Danvers, who, with the justices Meade and "Charters, were slain, with all their servants, while they were "asleep in their beds, by Sir John of Desmond, the Earl's "brother, in the year 1579; which piece of barbarity paved "the way for the destruction of the Desmond family soon after. "The pretence for this cruelty was Sir Henry Danvers' holding "service of goal delivery in Desmond's palatinate."

And now with this sorrowful tale, so descriptive of the lawless acts of those days, I shall close my first letter from the Kingdom of Kerry.

Ever yours.

LETTER II.

Tralee Spa—A Theory about Cromwell, which comes to nothing—The bridge of Castlemaine, “the oldest in Ireland”—Its history—Miltown—The Lakes of Carragh—Glenbegh—Dinner in a Shebeen-house—A Postmaster made happy—Magnificent Scenery of Dan’s Country—Inglis’s eulogium upon it—A Convent in the Wilderness—O’Connell’s eloquence accounted for—The Author turns Repealer, but recants immediately—The Post-boy warbles his wood notes wild, and speaks French—Smith’s description of this mountain pass—Travellers turned poets perforce—Strange Device for keeping French privateers off the coast—O’Connell’s tenantry.

Valencia.

My dear S—,

Don’t expect to hear one word about Valencia until I finish my account of our journey, if I can at all describe the country we passed through. Old Ireland for ever!

We left Tralee with that lively feeling which the excitement of novelty always inspires, and the fine day added to this zest. We were filled with hope and joy, and they are charming travelling companions. Immediately after setting out we began to ascend, and every step added interest to the landscape—a wooded glen—a rushing river, and bold rugged mountains. We did not visit Tralee Spa, which has been long famous. It is noted in the History of Kerry as follows:—“Tralee Spa “is situated about two miles distant from the town, near “a delightful strand, very commodious for air and exercise. “The soil about it is gravelly, and somewhat inclining to “turf on the east side. The well is near a foot deep, and “about three feet in diameter, flowing out of a small bank of “yellow clay mixed with gravel. It has been known above “fifty years, [this was printed in 1756] and hath been of late

“ years, and continues to be at present, in high repute, by “ reason of several notable cures effected by it.”

Our route swept round the eastern point of the Stacks Hills, and by Mr. Blennerhasset's domains. We paused to admire the view of the valley running eastward to Castle Island, Ballyseedy groves, the town, the bay, and the pretty white cottages of Blennerville, with the high hills beyond,—then we turned into a wild scene indeed! The road lay completely amongst mountains,—M'Gillicuddy's Reeks towering on the left, and the Slieve Misk range on the right,—to Castlemaine, a small town on the river Maine, which empties itself into Castlemaine Harbour; over this river is “ the oldest bridge in Ireland,” as our driver assured us. Certainly, old or young, it is one of the most picturesque; the buttments and the arches project very far out from the passage and the parapet walls. In fact they resemble far more the foundations of an old castle than the breakwaters of a bridge, and are covered with grass, brambles, ivy, woodbine, and all the variety of plants which love old ruins. Several men and boys were seated, or standing upon them, fishing with lines: and in the river, above the bridge, was a curious frame-work, erected gallows-wise, in which, alone in his glory, sate a fisherman watching his trap for salmon; there are also recesses in this bridge for cars to retreat into, and politely allow others to pass, like those on our beautiful and historical Thomond Bridge, at Limerick, which “ our grave and reverend seignors” of the city thought fit in their wisdom to destroy! Goths and Vandals as they have been, are, and ever will be! How I did crave the ability of sketching those time-worn old walls, that pleasantest method of record. I would give something to know if this were one of those bridges which that extraordinary being, Cromwell, employed his soldiers to build, when they were not more wickedly employed—knowing well, in his wonderful wisdom and calculation, that idleness would unnerve the strong arm; so, when no battle was to be fought, he changed their swords into masons' trowels. Thus I wrote in ignorance, for the facts

have proved that my remarks were made in pure lack of better information. Lo! "Castlemain, or Castlemaign, so " called from an antient castle that was erected here, *on a* " *bridge*, over the river Mang, said to have been built at the " joynt charge of Mac-Carty-More and one of the Earls of " Desmond, as a place of defence between their respective " frontiers. Each of these great men was to have an equal " claim to this fortress, and they agreed to give and receive " possession of it alternately. Mac-Carty went first into the " castle, and surrendered it to Desmond, who, instead of giving " possession of it in his turn, ordered his followers to hold it, " who shut the gates and drove off Mac-Carty and his people. " This place continued in Desmond's family until Queen " Elizabeth's reign, when it was delivered up to James, the " last Earl, who resigned it to the Queen, as may be seen in " *Pacata Hibernia*. During the troubles of 1641, the Irish " kept a constant garrison therein, until it was taken and " demolished by Ludlow; it was esteemed always an hold of " importance, as it defended the passage of the above-mentioned " river. On the Restoration, this castle was kept in the hands " of the Crown, and a constable* is appointed to guard it, " although it hath long been in ruins, who hath a small piece " of land annexed to it for his salary: the Clerk of the Crown " for this country is commonly appointed to this office; he " hath also the fishing of a small part of the river near the " bridge."—*Smith's History of Kerry*.

A later work says the constable receives £50 per annum for the ground rent, with the privilege of two fairs, and the fishery; salmon is plentiful in this river. The bay of Castlemain is infamous for shipwrecks. So there ends my fine theory of Cromwell and his soldiers, and his clear-sighted and active mind giving them work to keep them quiet! Well might our driver say it was the oldest bridge in Irelaud, built as it was in the feudal times of the Mac-Carty More and the Desmond;

* Like the Castle of Maryborough.

and it is beautiful in its old age—its *green* old age, as the parasitical plants and lichens testify. Our drive from this to Mil-town was pretty. Mil-town is upon Sir William Godfrey's estate. His domain is close to the town, and his dwelling, Kilcoleman Abbey, is a large old fashioned house, built of the red stone of the country, not very pleasing to an Irish eye, nor usual in an Irish landscape, but very frequent in England. The church is also built of the same. In the demesne, well preserved, is the ruin of an Augustinian Abbey, founded in the reign of Henry the Third, by Geoffry de Maurisco. It is of Gothic architecture, and very interesting; the eastern window is beautiful, and the attention which is bestowed upon its preservation does credit to the taste of the possessor.

From Mil-town the views increase in wildness until we reach Killorglin, a fishing village on the river Laune, where the inhabitants cure an immense quantity of salmon for the London market. The Laune carries along the overflowing waters of the Killarney lakes, as also those of numerous mountain streams, which it afterwards receives in its progress to the sea, into which it empties itself at Castlemaine Harbour.

About four miles from Killorglin, and a little to the left of the Cahirciveen road, we were pointed out where lay Lough Carragh, or rather the Lakes of Carragh, embosomed in the mountain recesses, and possessing extraordinary beauty. They are as yet little visited by tourists, though well-known to anglers. Ever since Isaac Walton's time, the brotherhood of the rod and line are to be envied for their intimacy with nature. The lakes are the Upper and the Lower, and are separated by a narrow channel; they are seven miles in length, and surrounded by the finest and the wildest scenery. M'Gillicuddy's Reeks and the bold points of Glencar are exhibited there in some of their grandest points of view. However, this is only hearsay, and I should abide by what my own eyes can vouch for.

Crossing the river Carragh, we proceeded along a high moory tract to Glenbegh, a charming spot, where the hills are partly clothed with trees. Lady Headly's fine taste suggested this

decoration. It is a small hamlet, near Rossbegh Point, and exceedingly lovely. Here we wished to remain; but we could get no lodge; and not even an inn large enough to accommodate us. There is a "shebeen house," where the people are extremely civil, and gave us mutton-chops and potatoes sufficient for twenty—we numbered four! There is a post-office here so little used, that the postmaster thanks one for the stray waif of a letter, upon which he can exhibit his dignity—his pride of office in the Glenbegh stamp. Oh! for a pen of fire to describe our route! I have the "thoughts that breathe," but I want the "words that burn," and without them I despair of conveying any idea of this enchanting country. How can it be that we have heard so little about it? Conceive mountains piled above mountains, until they are topped, or rather closed in by the gigantic M'Gillicuddy's Reeks on one side, and by the mighty Atlantic at the other, which is bounded by another range, with an outline of infinite variety, and then judge if Ireland be not worth exploring. I could not help feeling a respect for the genius and taste of the engineer who designed this road, which, after emerging from a wild and heathy pass, wound along the side of the Iveragh mountains, "Dan's Country," as our driver proudly called it,—two hundred feet above the waters of Castlemaine bay. Where mountain torrents rushed, were picturesque bridges thrown across their ravines; their beds were now dried, but we could well imagine the terrific grandeur of their voices in these sublime solitudes, mingling with the hoarse roar of the ocean and the melancholy cries of the sea-birds. The road skirts Drung Hill, which rises precipitately out of the sea to the height of 2104 feet, and I cannot attempt to describe the effect it produces to find yourself driving on a smooth road, with a huge mountain, fragrant with heath and rich in bloom, close at one side, and the sea sleeping in the summer evening's calm, 200 feet immediately beneath, laving the base of your track! I felt my soul filled with beauty and sublimity—fully satisfied. Nature had completely performed her part; and it was perfect bliss to

enjoy and admire her work. I longed for those I loved to share my transports. I felt so proud of my native land!

Inglis, in his tour through Ireland, mentions this scene with high praise:—"In the magnificence of its mountain and sea views it is little inferior to any of the celebrated roads along the shores of the Mediterranean; and is every way superior to the road from Bangor to Conway in North Wales."

At Kells, which is a sheltered little nook, in a retired creek, but with no lodges, we lost the view of Dingle Bay and its splendid scenery, and proceeded through a bleak and desolate country, relieved, however, by the lofty ranges of various forms surrounding us, and which occupy the whole district. Here, in the midst of the lonely wilds, is a settlement of monks, or friars—of what order I could not learn. This home was, perhaps, selected by those devoted and solitary beings, as affording an uninterrupted communion with Nature in her sternest aspect, and therefore more consonant to their feelings.

Between the freshness of the air, and the enthusiasm of our post-boy about "Dan," we sped merrily on. In descending to the coast we pass Bahoss, once the seat of Charles O'Connell, M.P., but now the Union Work-House for the district; and a little farther, near Cahirciveen, at the head of a small bay, forming the mouth of the Cahir river, are the walls of the humble birth-place of "the Liberator." I cannot wonder at the extraordinary power of the great Dan's eloquence, for the sublime objects amongst which all his early impressions were made, and his first ideas conceived, must have a peculiar force upon any mind raised above the mere animal order. I never before felt so much sympathy with him; no wonder, with his foot upon his native heather, that he should burn to have the sons of the soil as free as the waters of the Atlantic and as the gales of their mountains, or that he should claim for his country the position of an independent nation. She, who is placed by the records of past ages in such a lofty position as the seat of learning, and the nurse of religion, whose sons wandered over the face of the earth, seeking to found colleges in the desert, and

to re-establish or maintain the empire of letters and of Christianity, ought not to lose her rank in the scale of nations. Some one says the *renown* of nations is the best part of their inheritance. Ireland may justly lay claim to this honourable distinction; alas! it is all that perpetual misrule and inward dissensions have left to her. No marvel then, with such historical recollections, and born and brought up in the immediate influence of such scenery,—is familiar association with the noblest works of Nature,—that the eloquence of Dan O'Connell should be nervous and heart-stirring. But whither am I wandering?—you will start and say, my romance has made me a Repealer. No,—my reason forbids. I condemn the Union, formed as it was in sin and shame; yet I question would its repeal be conducive to the repose, the comfort, the prosperity of Ireland. The old example of the bundle of sticks might hold good here: while united they had strength, and no force could break them asunder,—when separated, they were immediately snapped across.

Our “post-boy,” a real Irish cognomen for the species,—for thus they are always called, no matter how aged they may be, was quite a character, and “a merry knave” withal. When not holding forth in praise of “Dan,” as he invariably named him, and who, he assured us, “could run up those hills as light as if he were but fifteen, and he more than seventy,—God bless him;” he was singing various Irish airs, generally with Irish words. At length he treated us to, “Oh! come to the West,” “Widow Machree,” “A Baby lay sleeping,” thus proving that Lover’s pathos and humour find an echo in Irish hearts, even in the remotest and dreariest places. He also urged his steeds in foreign tongue, “Vite, vite, vite.” Quere, has this word come across from Bantry Bay, from the French invaders?—for it is the very word used by French *gossuons* to French horses. I know not; but I know it was a refreshing change from the “Go along,” or “Come up, Neddy,” of our country.

Before I conclude this letter, I shall give Smith’s account

written nearly 100 years since, to compare with mine :—" The road from the other parts of Kerry into this barony, (so named from the river Behy, which waters it,) runs over very high " and steep hills, that stand in this parish, called Drung, and " Cahirlanawy, which road hangs in a tremendous manner " over that part of the sea that forms the bay of Castlemaine, " and is not unlike the mountain of *Penmenmaure*, in North " Wales, except that the road here is more stony and less " secure for the traveller. There is a custom among the " country people to enjoin every one that passes this mountain " to make some verses to its honour, otherwise they affirm, that " whoever attempts to pass it without versifying, must meet " with some mischance ; the original of which notion seems to " be, that it will require a person's whole circumspection to " preserve himself from falling off his horse. They repeated " to me several performances, both in Irish and English, made " on this occasion ; but this mountain is not, like that of Heli- " con, consecrated to the Muses, for all the verses that I heard " were almost as rugged and uncouth as the road on which " they were made, for which reason I shall not trouble the " reader with them, although I had several copies given me for " that purpose." Smith always calls Cahirciveen, Cahir, and so do all the country folk around. " The parish of Cahir lies to " the east of Valentia, and its church is the only one in repair " in the whole barony, near which are the ruins of several " small houses, built formerly by the neighbouring inhabitants " as places of sanctuary in time of war, which the privateers " never plundered. During the last French war, no privateer " landed on these western coasts, said to be owing to an order " of the French King for that purpose, occasioned by a " remonstrance laid before him by a certain titular bishop, " since dead, setting forth, that the value of all former depre- " dations of this kind was levied on the Roman Catholics by " the English, and they would be the only sufferers thereby."

A vast tract of land hereabouts belongs to the University of Dublin, and was set to a Mr. Connell,—we are to suppose an

ancestor of Dan O'Connell, who is now in possession. Derrynane he holds by lease from the Earls of Cork, and I am told, amid all his numerous avocations and stupendous schemes, he is anxious about the improvement of his property and the condition of his tenantry. To judge from what we saw, the peasantry are miserable. On a hill near Cahirciveen is a pretty place called Hill Grove, where his agent, Mr. Primrose, resides. At length we reached the Ferry, and skimmed across the moonlit waters to Valencia; and here I shall say good-night!

LETTER III.

Valencia Island—Cliffs of Brey Head and Fohilly—Valencia Harbour—The Knight of Kerry—Kerry Cattle—The Valencia Slate-quarries—The Natives not prepared for the accommodation of Tourists—Voyage of Discovery in the Harbour—Caus-Clogher Cave—a Sister of Grauna-wale—Longevity of the Natives—Their Courtesy—Consumption unknown in Valencia—Irish melody—A Vessel in Distress—Eulogium on Mrs. Roper's Hotel—Attractions of Valencia.

Valencia.

Wearied as much in mind as in body, by the exciting and charming variety of our journey, we reached this exceedingly comfortable hotel. At first we felt discouraged at finding it a place seemingly dedicated to the revels of Comus, for the sounds and scents of "tipsy dance and jollity" greeted our senses as we approached. However, these orgies were of very rare occurrence, and were at this time caused by the gaiety of a boat race in the harbour. The triumphant rejoiced, and the defeated found comfort in the merry strains of the bagpipes, which issued through the open door by which we entered, sad and silent—for we found no William to welcome us. But he soon arrived to cheer us, and we were accommodated, at the expense of her own comfort, by our kind landlady, with excellent beds fragrant with cleanliness. Next morning all was as peaceful and quiet as the waters of this lovely haven, so sheltered and secure. The island is seated in the centre of the mouth of the bay, a queen on her watery throne. It is seven miles long, and three broad, and is very beautiful in its bearings; the shore where we landed, facing the east, is low and tame, that at the opposite, which faces the west, and breasts the Atlantic, is high and bold. The light-house, whose revolving light looked so fairy-like in the closing shades of night, as

we crossed the ferry, stands on a projecting line of rocks, north of the isle where Cromwell's fort once stood. Beginnis, or "The Small Island," lies near, and between these is one of the entrances into the harbour. The southern entrance is formed by Brey Head and the mainland, and is called Port Magee. Vessels may enter at either, and sail quite round the island, for which there is a sufficient depth of water at all times of the tide, and safe anchorage within the harbour for ships of any size or tonnage. It is well suited for privateers or smugglers, for if a government vessel came in on one side, the freebooter or free-trader could slip out at the other. However, they say Cromwell had forts on both sides of the island, and we have waterguards, the sea police, in our time. The cliffs of Brey Head, which is the extreme point of Valentia to the south-west, rise to the height of 628 feet. This promontory is one of the boldest and most striking on the whole coast of Kerry. The cliffs of Fohilly, which are 886 feet, are also very grand, and from the summit the view is magnificent. Valencia harbour, beside being one of the finest and safest in the world, so easy of entrance, so sheltered and so deep, possesses another claim to peculiar interest in being the most westerly port in Europe, and the island is "the next parish to America." The soil is fertile, and appears to be chiefly under tillage, save where the short sweet herbage is studded with cows and sheep. It principally, if not entirely, belongs to the Knight of Kerry. Here he is lord of the soil, and of the people's hearts. He is truly a king in his own territories. With Alexander Selkirk he may say :—

"I am monarch of all I survey ;

"My right there is none to dispute ;

"From the centre all round to the sea

"I am lord of the fowl and the brute."

Thus is he considered in the isle ; he is fondly beloved and devotedly respected by his tenantry, and richly does he merit their love and their respect, for he spends his life in trying to

improve and assist them. He is now a fine, and very fine-looking old gentleman of 71 years; the descendant of a noble race and lofty name. For an earl's coronet he would not exchange the proud old Irish title of Knight of Kerry; nor would his countrymen think the new half so dignified as the ancient one. "The Knight," is in every one's mouth; every thing is referred to "the Knight." The Knight's dwelling, Glanleen, is beautifully situated, near the sea, on a gentle eminence, over a wooded glen and clear stream. It is near the rocks upon which the light-house is built, and commands an enchanting view of the harbour and its enclosing mountains, which jut into the sea on every side, with Cahirciveen nestled amongst their brown slopes. Opposite to the town, forming an interesting feature in this landscape, stands the ruined castle of Ballycarbery, by whom erected is not known; there is a large fleur-de-lis carved on a stone in the inside. The Knight is famous for his highly-bred black Kerry cattle, which are justly considered valuable both for their rich milk and fine beef. They ornament his lawns and glens; they are very pretty, small, and delicately formed, with deer-like limbs, small heads with fine horns curving upward and tipped with black. They remind one of a dark little beauty, with an intelligent countenance, piercing black eyes, and *un petit nez retroussé*, fairy feet and ancles, and dainty skilful fingers.

The slate-quarries are extremely good, and are well worked by an English company, to the great advantage of the peasantry, who are blessed with constant employment; all the Irish people want is employers "to give them leave to toil." We were much amused and interested by observing the novel uses this material is converted to. Chimney-pieces, nicely carved and pillared, and ornamented to resemble marble; round centre tables and sofas, for drawing-rooms; garden seats, washing-tables, flower-stands, ink-stands, and ornaments of various kinds.

William, who has been here nearly a fortnight, is greatly pleased with Valencia, and with both its marine and mountain

Flora. It is vexatious that we cannot get a lodge, for we should very much like to fix our quarters here for a month. Indeed, in this respect we have been sadly disappointed, for neither at Glenbegh, Rossbegh, or Kells, were there lodges ready for inhabitants. Lady Headly has had some built at Glenbegh, but they are not furnished; and we have found them thus every where we have enquired; and as it would be nearly impossible for us to bring earthen-ware, blankets, beds, tables, chairs, &c., we are forced to give up our design. In fact, the people appear as yet to have no conception of the requirings of visitors to these lovely localities. However, the railroads will soon teach them, and will sharpen their wits to be prepared for the immense influx of travellers, sea-bathers, and scenery-seekers, into these wilds.

We took shipping in the "Cecilia Fitzgerald," named after the Knight's lady, and went to explore the harbour. We landed at Beginnis, and found delightful places for bathing. Afterwards we visited a famous cave, lying under the northern mainland cliffs, near Dowlas Head. We entered the gloomy cavern, having taken down the sails, but there was ample room for our masts, and would be were they ten feet taller; on we glided far into the dark abyss, diving into the secrets of the huge mountain's bosom, filled with a serious awe! It is very long, and very deep; the roof is arched, and of a great height; in two parts, the earth above distils itself into showers, which fall with a ceaseless plash into the deep green sea below; notwithstanding, it is called "Caus-clogher," or "The Warm Cave." It resembles, in some degree, the sacred aisles of a mighty cathedral, (if any thing so entirely the work of nature can be likened to the work of art), even to the altar, which is typified by an immense flat rock at the far end; and then at each side appear side-entrances for the priest and his attendants, these being low arched caves, branching off still farther into the depths of the mountain. The echo here is wonderful, when the overpowering awe subsides a little, and permits you to awaken it; quite as wonderful as those at Killarney, although

perhaps less distinct; and its replies seem to come from voices deeply buried in the bowels of the earth. It is fearful to awaken those solemn sleepers! One of our young ladies was asked to sing. "I cannot—I feel more ready to cry," was her touching answer. We felt a thrilling curiosity and fascination in gazing downwards many, many feet, in watching the fish gliding fearlessly by, undisturbed by our presence, and sporting in their idle play in the green transparent depths; we were in their solitudes, and they heeded us not! even the cunning art of their destructive enemy, man, could not reach them there. When we emerged into light and sunshine, and felt the free sea-breeze blowing around us, we experienced a sensation of relief, as if a weight had been removed from our hearts, while our eyes were dazzled with the brightness of the outer world. This cave is 70 feet high; after leaving it our boatmen bade us look where it lay—we did so in vain! By none save those acquainted with every nook and creek of those waters, could its entrance be discovered. A smuggler could run in here, and discharge her cargo into small boats or canoes, and creep out again, escaping discovery from any vessel, even within a few yards of her.

Before we returned to shore, we sailed to see the far part of Valencia, and the light-house, which is very picturesque. All light-houses are. There are no remains to be traced of Cromwell's fort; and we were told this point bore the name, long before the revolutionary hero saw the light of life. "Crom-a-wale," an old Irish word—perhaps the name of a sister to Grau-na-wale. Perhaps, also, there had been a Danish encampment here, which gave the word "fort." I cannot conceive for what military purpose Cromwell would delay his troops in Valencia, and particularly fix upon so low a situation for placing a garrison, unless he, anticipating light-houses, had beacon-fires kindled here to guide his ships into safe harbourage. At all events, it seems to be an ascertained fact, that he caused two forts to be erected on the island—one on each side.

Valencia is graced with a church and chapel, several schools,

and many happy looking inhabitants in comfortable abodes, who live, we were told, to a great age. One woman lived to over a hundred years, before she ever left the isle ; at length she formed a fatal wish to see "a pattern," near Cahirciveen ; so she was carefully brought over to the mainland, "where she took her death on landing." Our informant evidently thought that she *could not* die on the island ; and that this extraordinary fancy for locomotion was given to her, that she might get permission to lay down her length of days.

The people are extremely civil and courteous, and, we are assured, very honest—theft being a vice seldom heard of. The air is very salubrious, "the vapours being brushed constantly by the sea winds, render it pure and wholesome." Consumption is unknown here ! Ah, can this be true ?

The walk up the hill to the slate-quarries, and skirting the Knight's demesne, affords most beautiful views. We saw them to peculiar advantage, for two government steamers, the Stromboli, and the Warrior, and a merchant barque, the Try-again, were lying at anchor in the bay, which was steeped in the gorgeous colours of the setting sun, that tinted also the surrounding mountains. I think that summer evening landscape is painted on my memory for ever ; so calm, so rich, so peaceful, so still, and so holy ! As we descended, we were actually waylaid by the powerfully sweet strains that poured from an open cabin—a female voice singing an interminable Irish ballad—and yet it ended too soon. She had many listeners, as entranced as ourselves, who appeared gratified at our involuntary delay—involuntary, I may well say, for we really could not proceed while her clear ringing notes sounded on the air.

A vessel is lying near Brey Head, which put into port in distress—only four living souls on board ; all the rest of her crew perished from fever and scurvy. She is from Africa, with palm oil. She looks very melancholy—like a poverty-stricken, weather-beaten wanderer. Oh ! so unlike the trim Stromboli,

which looks so gallant and gay, "youth at the prow, and pleasure at the helm."

The hotel kept by Mrs. Roper is a most comfortable one, being scrupulously clean, well attended, and the charges very moderate; its only fault is that it is not large enough, for if we could get apartments for a prolonged stay, we would gladly remain longer.

On this side, Valencia is not at all lonely; the scene at the quay is always very lively; the slate-works are quite near; several small vessels are lying by for lading, and pleasure boats are resting at anchor; then there are chances for variety which the ferry from the mainland affords, and the occasional visits of government and merchant vessels. There are several nice mansions, and highly respectable gentry, and their equipages give more life and variety to the scene; so that far from being lonesome, it is a cheerful, bustling place, with the choice, by going to the other side of the island, of having a solitude the most complete, where the Atlantic rolls its immense waves at your feet, with the Blaskets and the sentinel Skelligs keeping watch and ward over "the Gem of the Sea" on the one hand, and mountains to your heart's content bounding in all the rest of your view on the other. Can I say more? Do you like Valencia?

Ever yours.

LETTER IV.

Consolation for the sea-sick—Arrival at Dingle—A Giantess—Female Beauty at a premium, Middle-aged Women invisible, and Gentlemen unattractive in Dingle—An Uncomfortable Churchyard—The *lightest* Water in the World—Smith's Historical Sketch of Dingle and its Ancient Monuments.

Dingle.

My dear S—

All unwillingly we prepared to leave Valencia, we—the lately arrived—who were not half satisfied with our brief sojourn among such new and exhaustless riches. We again got on board the “Cecilia,” and having sailed to the other side of the island, that we might see every entrance into the harbour, and pay afresh our tribute of admiration to its beauty and security, we steered our course for Dingle. The sea outside was rough, the breeze cold, and the squalls somewhat frequent; but our stout little vessel got on well, and skimmed over the troubled waters, as though she were quite at home in the tumult of winds and waves. Some of the party were very sick, but our captain assured them it was so much the better, and that “they would be as clean as a new pin by the time we got to Dingle”—small comfort for poor sufferers! Others were not so disturbed, and therefore could admire the bold majesty of the headlands, and the Blasket Isles, standing alone in those mighty waters. When we had got about half way, we could discern afar off the stately Skelligs, in their solitary and stern grandeur.

The entrance into Dingle harbour is extremely interesting. There is one pile of rocks near the entrance which resembles a castle—“a castled crag” indeed! with towers, bastions, and

fortified walls; and there are others, curiously shaped, known by the name of "the Smoothing Irons." They are exactly of that form, and I suppose Fion-ma-Coul's wife was wont to use them in her laundry.

At the extreme end of this capacious and sheltered harbour, ("blind harbour" our captain called it, which means not being easily observed from the sea,) is the town of Dingle, seated on the hilly slopes, and backed by lofty mountains; a most picturesque situation. Dingle dates from a castle built by an old English family of the name of Hussey, to whom one of the Earls of Desmond granted a tract of land in that vicinity. On the forfeiture of the Desmond estates, it was granted to the Earl of Ormonde, from whom it was purchased by Fitzgerald, Knight of Kerry.

The town is an old Spanish settlement; but I suppose the invaders were trading adventurers, for there are no remains of warlike buildings to be seen—nothing left to tell of past glory or enterprise—no trace of a foreign nation having gained footing here, save in the deep black eyes and hair, and swarthy complexions of some of the people. Some indeed are as fair as any Saxon, and none are to say handsome. Hitherto I have observed but little personal beauty in Kerry; in Dingle, however, their forms and limbs are better shaped than elsewhere. The tallest woman, save one, I ever saw, was here. She looked fit to be an empress, so stately and dignified were her deportment and tread. In general, the women appear to grow prematurely old; in fact, there are no *young women*; there are girls and children, the latter pretty, the former less pretty—then all of a sudden they are old, withered, ugly. You never see a *young* mother, or a matron. Marriage seems to possess a spell against the cestus of *Venus*. There is no such being as a comely dame of twenty-five or thirty; you seem to see no women between the ages of seventeen and fifty; beyond the latter age, all are harsh, wizened, and dried up. Perhaps this is the effect of the sea air and mountain breeze, combined with poverty, laziness, and filth; for they are unusually dirty. Opposite to

our lodgings, at Miss Walsh's, in Green Lane—green! so much for a name!—live a very poor and most dismally dirty family; but when we learned that the parents, amongst the many difficulties which attend the precarious life of a fisherman, have the additional misfortune of having two children deaf and dumb, we pitied more than we condemned them,—yet an Irish pigsty would be clean compared to their hovel,—and here, in that very hovel, meat and vegetables were exhibited for sale on Sundays—and on Sundays only!

As far as my brief observation goes, the people appear most primitive in their notions and habits. They make their own dyes; the frieze is often a deep bright blue, darker than what is called “sky-blue,” and quite clear. The country-girls frequently shine out in the same coloured garments, that we are told in nursery rhyme, “the king's daughter” wore, when she condescended “to come to town” to visit the snail-a-pooka, “in a red petticoat and a green gown;” unfortunately the red is somewhat dingy, or the assemblage of colours would be quite suitable for a picture. Here, and universally in Kerry, the hoods of their cloaks are worn over the head.

The men are tall, clever looking fellows, with ugly faces, and they generally wear round-crowned little hats of bee-hive form. They are comfortably clothed in home-manufactured frieze and stockings.

There are some trees in and about Dingle. Mr. Hussey's place, and Captain Hickson's of “the Grove,” can boast of some; also the churchyard, which I admired much as a cozy resting-place for one's bones, until a little boy told me “it was the greatest place in the world for *rots*,” Anglice “rats.” This information cured my earthy desire, and recalled to my mind the tale of the wicked German bishop, who was devoured by rats as a just punishment for denying his corn to the poor during a famine. There is a difference—he was eaten alive.

The church is a small building with an octagon tower, turretted, that seems more suited to a baronial residence of the feudal times than to an humble place of worship; yet it looks

very pretty in the various landscapes, peeping above the trees, when it does not betray that it belongs to a church.

The chapel is a large one, and much decorated outside ; I am sorry to say, in rather a paltry taste.

There is also a convent here, but no trace of ancient days could we find anywhere ; no ruins of the castle, or old houses. Some curiously carved stones over some of the dwellings were all we observed, and those were so white-washed, we could not make out their meanings. In the said Green Lane, where are our lodgings, there is a fine clear spring, which is constantly resorted to by the inhabitants. We thought it excellent water, until a man whom we met in one of our rambles, and who entered very frankly into a long conversation, told us it was nothing to "Tubberone," which was the purest and *lightest* water in the world ; so wholesome and *light*, that a delicate lady in Dublin had it always sent up to her. Poor thing ! she must have been a native of Dingle, and in the fanciful caprice of illness imagined there was healing balm in her native spring. We went in search of this vaunted fountain of Nature's own distilling, and were directed up a filthy lane ; however, this lane was like the toad, which,

" Though ugly and venomous,

" Wears yet a precious jewel in its head,"

for at the top of it we found this diamond spring of clearest crystal.

I have so much to say of the neighbourhood of Dingle, and so little of the town itself, that I shall dismiss it thus briefly, and give you Smith's notice of it, which is really far more interesting than my observations could possibly be. You may see it was thought much of long ago. Always keep in mind that Smith's History was published in 1756.

" Dingle was incorporated by Queen Elizabeth in 1585, and
" the same privileges were granted to it that Drogheda enjoyed,
" with a superiority over the harbours of Ventry and Smere-
" wick ; and she gave the inhabitants £300 to wall the place.
" King James the First renewed its privileges ; and granted it

“ a charter bearing date March the 2nd, in the 4th year of his
“ reign, at Westminster; which recites ‘that, at the humble
“ petition, and for the faithful services of the inhabitants, done
“ from time to time to the King and his progenitors, the said town
“ of Dingle-cushy shall be henceforth a free borough and town
“ corporate in itself. To elect a sovereign out of the burgesses
“ yearly, on St. James’s day; to enter on his office the Michael-
“ mas following. To have a sword and mace carried before
“ him. A liberty of two English miles round the parish church,
“ with a guild of merchants as in Drogheda. The ports of
“ Ventry, Smerewick, and Ferritur’s Creek to be within the
“ liberty of said town. To have the custom called coquet in
“ the said ports, and that of Dingle. Two carrucates, called
“ Hapston, granted to the corporation, reserving the hanks in
“ the same in the Crown; to be held without any rent in soc-
“ cage. The sovereign to act as justice of the peace within the
“ liberties, to enquire into all felonies, regulate artificers,
“ weights, and measures, and to be escheator and coroner,
“ within the liberty. The house of John Hussey granted for a
“ goal and common hall to the corporation. The inhabitants
“ to be free of all tolls, &c. No inhabitants to be compelled to
“ serve in arms further than one day’s journey from the town;
“ and that only for the preservation of the place, except at the
“ command of the Lord Deputy, or Lord President of Mun-
“ ster. Liberty to hold four sessions yearly, with return of all
“ writs, &c. To have the lands of the burgage, and others
“ called the *acres* of the same, with all waifs, strays, goods of
“ felons, &c. &c.

“ Dingle is the only town in the barony. The Irish formerly
“ called it ‘Dain-gean-ni-Cushy,’ i. e. ‘the fortress or Castle
“ of Hussey,’ an old English family, to whom one of the Fitz-
“ gerald, Earls of Desmond, had formerly granted a conside-
“ rable tract of land in these parts, viz.: from Castle Drum to
“ Dingle, and others say, he gave him as much as he could walk
“ over in his jack-boots in one day. Hussey built a castle here,
“ which is said to have been the first that was erected in this

“ place, the vaults of which are now used as the town gaol. It
“ was forfeited by the Earl of Desmond, or at least by one of his
“ followers, on his rebellion; and was granted to the Earl of
“ Ormond with divers other lands contiguous to it; from whom
“ ——— Fitzgerald, Knight of Kerry, bought it, who also had a
“ large castle in this town. Several of the houses were built in
“ the Spanish fashion, with ranges of stone balcony windows, this
“ place being formerly frequented much by ships of that nation,
“ who traded with the inhabitants, and came to fish on this coast;
“ most of them are of stone, with marble door and window
“ frames: on one is an inscription signifying that the house
“ was built by one Rice, anno 1563: and on a stone, beneath
“ two roses, are carved these words, in capital letters, ‘ At the
“ Rose is the best wine.’ Many of them have dates as old as
“ Queen Elizabeth’s time, and some earlier: but the best modern
“ edifice in this town belongs to the Knight of Kerry, at the
“ back of which are large gardens regularly disposed, and kept
“ in good order. Lime being scarce here, the town walls were
“ built of clay mortar, and are gone much to decay. The town
“ stands at the bottom of a small but safe harbour, at the mouth
“ of which large vessels may ride secure; the channel lies on
“ the west side, and ships of a hundred tons may come up to
“ the town. The entrance of the harbour was formerly defended
“ by a small fort or block-house, which has been many years
“ demolished. Here is a barrack for a company of foot, and a
“ tolerably good Saturday market. There was formerly an
“ antient monastery in this town, which was a cell of the abbey
“ of Killagh, near Castlemain. The parish church, dedicated
“ to St. James, is said to have been formerly built at the charge
“ of the Spaniards. It was originally very large, but most of
“ the old structure is gone to ruin; a part only of which is kept
“ in repair for divine service, and is called St. Mary’s chapel;
“ in which is a handsome monument, consisting of a pannel of
“ black marble, with the following inscription in gold letters,
“ placed between two Ionic pillars, adorned with cherubims and
“ capitals of Italian alabaster:

“ Immodicis Brevis est Ætas
et rara Senectus ;

H. S. E.

Iohannes Fitz-Gerald, Eques Kerriensis
Ex antiquâ stirpe Equitum Kerriensium,
Oriundus,

Suavitate ingenii, et integritate morum
Eximius.

Erat in ore Venustus
In pectore Benevolentia
In verbis fides,

Candidus, Facilis, Iucundus,
Quot notos tot habuit Amicos
Inimicum certe neminem

Talis quum esset. Febri correptus
Immature obiit

A. D. 1741.

Hoc Monumentum

Charissimi Mariti Memoriam Sacram

Margaretta Conjux

Mœrens posuit.

“ Arms, ermine a cross saltier gules.

“ Supporters, on the dexter side a boar, on the sinister a
“ dragon.

“ Being borne by the Earls of Desmond, from whom the
“ family are descended.

“ On an old grave-stone in the church-yard is the following
“ epitaph, in capital letters, except the quotation at the end :

Stephen Rice lies here, late Knight
of Parliament, an happy life full four-
score years full virtuously he spent.
His loyal wife Ellen Trant, who died
five years before him, lies here also.
Lord grant them life for evermore.

M.D.C.XXII.

“ Huic succurre tuis votis Pia Mater Jesu,

“ In super adde tuas, Lector amice, preces.’

“ Arms, Quarterly, Party per pale engrailed ; in the second
“ and third, a Lion rampant.

" This Stephen Rice was ancestor to Sir Stephen Rice, an eminent actor in the troubles of 1688.

" Round the margin of an old tomb-stone in this church-yard " is this inscription, in Gothic characters :

" Trinitas individua, salva nos. I. N. R. I. O. Paper M. N. P. P. &c.
" J. N. A. M. Amen. 1504. Die le Beo, B. Gar.

" The last words are Irish abbreviated, and signify, ' God " give the Fitz-Geralds long life.' "

Whatever " Dingle-cushy " might have been in its high and palmy days of castles, and knights dwelling therein, Dingle is now a very poor place; and I question can any town in Spain or elsewhere exhibit more wretchedness, filth, and poverty.

I wonder is the old expression, " he is gone to Dingle-de-cooch," meaning to the world's end, or to ruin, or out of memory, derived from " Dingle-cushy," which is so very remote.

My pen is bad, my neck has a " crick " * in it, and I am tired by a long walk, lovely though it was; for alas! I had to endure the misery of tight shoes, and I hobbled down hill, " with bruised feet and spirits weary," like the poor swans of Lir.

Ever yours.

* " Crick, among farriers, is when a horse cannot turn his neck any manner of way, but holds it fore right, insomuch that he cannot take his meat from the ground without great pain."—*Encyclopedia Britannica*.

LETTER V.

A Wet Day at Dingle—The Funeral of a Convert—Frequency of Intemperance—Cheapness of Provisions—Burnham, the seat of Lord Ventry—Relic of the Knights Templar—Battle of Ventry, which lasted 366 days—Hanmer's Account of it—The Blasket Islands.

Dingle.

My dear S——

It is pouring rain! a wet Sunday in Dingle! can any thing be more doleful? We had intended to have gone to Ventry to church, but the rain prevented, and here we are, "cabined, cribbed, confined." What is it to us that the Atlantic is near?—we cannot see it—we cannot hear it. What is it to us that we are surrounded by mountains?—they are shrouded in mist. I can think of nothing but Washington Irving's description of a wet day, and the cow standing patiently to be rained upon! Our greatest variety is the inspection of the folk returning from mass, and opposite to us the sale of vegetables, and of pork so nasty looking, as to induce me to believe the Jews were wise in prohibiting it as an article of food; and the young natives fighting amongst each other, none the cleaner for its being Sunday.

A funeral has just passed, and on my remarking how very poorly it was attended, the waiter, "Bailly junior," who enters into conversation most familiarly, yet without the smallest degree of impudence or impertinence, informed us "it was one of them turncoats who never had big funerals; for only their own sort went with them." It was quite evident that Bailly thought a small funeral a disgrace to Dingle. He continued to detail with great indignation the effects of the "parvarting" or "convarting" that is carried on here. Pity such excellent

intentions should produce distrust and dissension. However, where there is sincerity in the soul, this zeal will be, like mercy, twice blessed ; "it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes." These conversions are attributed to the exertions of the Irish Society, and to the use of the Irish language in the church service, and are regarded with much interest. I am told that since 1822 the converts to the Established Church have been nearly a thousand.

At this moment a drunken man is declaring he would "rather give three cheers for himself than for Dan O'Connell," suiting the action to the words, in which he is clamorously joined by the surrounding ragged little regiment. Indeed it is deplorable to see how little influence the advice of Father Matthew has had here. I have seen more drunken men since our arrival, than for twelve months in Limerick—a certain token of want of civilization.

We are really quite unfortunate in our search for a lodge. There are none built near the shore, and the only tolerable one, situated in a retired part of the town, is engaged. There are lodgings, but as they are in the main street, we may just as well stay where we are, and make our stay as short as possible, for the uncertainty of the weather makes our excursions uncertain also. It is surprising that some of the owners of the soil have not speculated in building and fitting up summer residences for sea-bathers in this healthful and lovely place. I am certain they would let well, and be a profitable investment for capital.

We endeavoured yesterday to go to Ventry, but could not get a car. One car was out with another party, and "the other" (by which we judge there are but two for hire) had no horse to draw it; for he was out of town two miles off, "at a bit of ground."

The Kerry accent is very different from the low gentle brogue of Limerick. It is jerky like that of Cork, but not so expressive of good temper and liveliness; on the contrary, it is rather of a complaining tone. The people are extremely

obliging and civil, placing, alas ! far too little value on their time. But that is common to all Ireland ; except, perhaps, in the North, where the folk have some of the notions of their neighbours the Scotch, and amongst the rest, that time is wealth. Provisions are very cheap ; we saw good sized chickens bought for fourpence per pair. Mutton is small, but excellent, and very reasonable. I imagine beef is only to be spoken of upon Christmas Day,—at least we saw none here. Eggs are scarce, as well as butter, as they are exported to Cork for the English market. Fish of various kinds are to be had for a song. Fuel is also very cheap, and why not ? for Dingle is surrounded with bog. We seem as if quite out of the world here, and only conjecture that the assizes are being held in Tralee, as the rain has come in such abundance to the county.*

Situated on the south-west side of the harbour is Burnham, Lord Ventry's residence. It must command a fine prospect, but in itself is not at all handsome, and is quite bare of trees. It is in such an exposed situation, I suppose it would be difficult to coax trees to grow there ; perhaps our climate was different in the days of old, when forests clothed our hills and covered the space now occupied by bogs. Burnham was formerly called Ballingolin—I marvel why they ever changed the name. We were told that near this, in a bog, was lately found a large brass spur, which had been gilt. It is supposed that it belonged to one of the Knights Templar, as a body of that order possessed a considerable portion of land in the neighbourhood.

As I cannot at all convey an exact description of this remote peninsula from my own observation, I must have recourse to whatever information I can obtain ; so do not be surprised at

* There is a notion, or a saying, prevalent in some parts of Ireland, that the assizes bring rain. I cannot explain its origin ; but this much is certain, that however cloudless the sky may be on these occasions, they are seldom unaccompanied by heavy hearts and showers of tears.*

my correctness, when you compare my pen and ink sketch with your map. You will see that Dingle Bay encloses all the space between Valencia and Mount Eagle; that Dingle Harbour is one nook secluded from the bay, that Ventry Harbour is another, and that they are divided by a narrow isthmus of hill, upon which Burnham is seated. The western point of Ventry Harbour is called Cahir Trant, and there is an old Danish intrenchment there. The people have a tradition that this isthmus was the last ground that was possessed by the Danes in Ireland, and that it could be easily defended by a handful of men, who were also masters at sea, against a multitude. They have another tradition still more romantic, of a battle fought on Ventry strand, which is fully three miles long, between Dara Down, monarch of the world, and Finn Macoul, which lasted for three hundred and sixty-six days! J. — brought me a narrative of this famous fight, which he obtained at a shop: I believe it would be very difficult for him to get many other books here. It is entitled, "The battle of Ventry Harbour, which took place in the fourth century, and continued without intermission for a year and a day. Being a literal translation from an old Irish manuscript." Certainly, of all the wild stories that ever I read, this is the wildest; but I am convinced our edition is no translation from the Irish; it contains neither the strong and gorgeous descriptions that are to be met with in Irish prose, and which equal and resemble the lustre of the Arabian Nights, nor the musical pathos of the Irish poetry. Still, as a tale of the soil, it afforded some interest to us, and a hearty laugh. It is in high repute here as a literary treasure. I find, in a note in Smith's Kerry, the following account given of the legend, which I think worth extracting:—"It is not improbable that this tradition was founded on the account given by Hanmer, in his Chronicle, p. 24, 25, for which he cites the book of Hoath, of a great battle fought at Ventry between the Irish and the Danes, about the time of Constantine the Great; the occasion of which battle, according to the said author, was as follows:—

“ There were, at this period, several persons kept in pay, not
“ only to defend the kingdom, but also, it seems, to travel into
“ distant countries, where they fought several combats, and
“ brought a yearly tribute to their country. (Which latter
“ part, the excursions of the Irish, then called the Scots, into
“ Britain, in some sort reconciles). These champions, he says,
“ were so much envied for their exploits, that several foreigners
“ joined to invade Ireland, in different places at once. Some
“ landed in the north part of the kingdom, and were repulsed
“ with great slaughter by Conkedah, one of the Kings of
“ Ulster. A second party, that landed at Skerries, was defeated
“ at a place called Knocknegan, i. e. *the hill of dead men's heads*,
“ by Dermot, King of Leinster. The third company of these
“ invaders came to Ventry, (Hanmer calls it Fintry) i. e. *the*
“ *white strand*, where the Irish, being assembled from all parts,
“ prevented their landing for seven days; which occasioned the
“ slaughter of so many people, that the sea was coloured red
“ with the blood of the slain. At length one Gillymore, Prince
“ of Thomond, being disgusted because he was ordered from
“ the front of the battle to the rear, revolted to the enemy, and
“ gave them notice of a proper place that was left unguarded,
“ to land their forces; which they did accordingly, and set fire
“ to their fleet. The place where they landed was easily
“ defended by an isthmus, where they refreshed their men for
“ ten days, without the Irish being able to annoy them; during
“ which time Gillymore headed them in several attacks against
“ his own countrymen. One day, says the legend, Gillymore
“ having washed his hands in some water, which he had dis-
“ coloured with the blood of the natives, and soon after calling
“ for a cup of wine, he was answered that there stood a bowl of
“ that liquor upon the table. He having, it seems, mistaken the
“ bowl he had washed in for that of the wine, drank it up.
“ Upon which a foreigner asked him what kind of fellow he
“ was, who like a brute had drunk up his own blood? Gilly-
“ more, upon hearing this, took it so much to heart, that the
“ next night he departed secretly, submitted to his father, and

“gave him a particular account of the weakness of the invaders, which turned out so much to their disadvantage in several succeeding skirmishes, that they were at last overthrown with great slaughter.” Such, I suppose, is the most reasonable report of the Battle of Ventry, which bears no shadow of resemblance to the Dingle edition, save that in both, one of the Irish band proved to be a double traitor,—the very part one would fain expunge.

According to the same author, the Irish were assisted in repelling this invasion by the Danes, who were then long settled in Ireland; and by the sept or clan of Finma-Coyle and Fin-Erin. Saxo Grammaticus, who wrote the history of the Danes, says that Fin and the Finni were a great people in that country, hardy, tall, and given to plunder; that the name of Erin was of royal blood amongst them; and that Fin Erin was a great commander, who brought many Danes into Ireland; from whence Hanmer conjectures this kingdom might have formerly received the name of Erin.

Mount Eagle and Maran's Reeks enclose the waters of Ventry Harbour at the northern side. To the west of Mount Eagle is Dunquin, of which the outer point, called Dunmore Head, is the most western extremity of Europe. The country people call it Ty-Vorney-Gueerane, or Mary Geerane's house, and hold it in high respect.

From this point the most remarkable objects in the landscape, or rather the *sea*-scape, are the group of islands called the Blaskets. I cannot do better than allow my favourite Smith to describe them for you; for why should I trouble you with my poor attempts, when I have him at my elbow?

“About a mile and a half from this promontory stands the largest of the Blaskets, or Ferritur's Islands; called also the Blasques, probably from *blaosc* or *blaosg*, in Irish, *a scale*, or *shell*, being supposed to have been scaled off the continent of Ireland. These islands were twelve in number, but four of them are only rocks. They formerly belonged to the Earl of Desmond, who gave them to the family of Ferritur, and

“these, by joining in the rebellion of that unfortunate Earl, forfeited them to the crown.

“The island called Innis-more, i. e. ‘the Great Island,’ is about three miles in length; it hath a high mountain, with some arable ground towards the north-east end; five or six families reside on it, who pay tithes to a very distant parish called Ballinvoher. The inhabitants are strong, lusty and healthy, and what is very surprising, neither man, woman, or child died on it for the space of forty-five years, although several persons, who during that period came over to the mainland, fell sick and died out of the island, almost within sight of their usual abode. Somewhat like this salubrity of the air is also mentioned of the Western Islands of Scotland. On this island are the ruins of a very ancient church.

“The second of these in magnitude they call Innis-Mac-Keilane, or Mac Keilane’s Isle. It lies seven miles west by south from the headland of Dunmore. As it stands too far out in the great Western Ocean, and the lands being low, and too bleak to afford shelter to inhabitants, there have been none there for many years past. But there stand in it the ruins of an ancient chapel, in which an old stone chalice, and a baptismal font also of stone, still remain; likewise a small cell or hermitage, being an arch of stone neatly put together without any mortar or cement, which admits of no rain through its roof. There is one of the same kind at Fane, in Ventry parish, in a ruinous condition, and another at Gal-lerus, of which more hereafter. The Irish say that these cells were erected by the first missionaries who preached the gospel in these parts; they have the same appearance withinside as the most ancient Roman arches, and were, like them, built without mortar. They were probably the first edifices of stone that were erected in Ireland, and may possibly challenge even the Round Towers, which stand near several of our old cathedral churches, in point of antiquity. Their form seems to have been taken from that of the small huts, made of bended wattles by the old inhabitants

“of the British Islands, which being stuck in the ground, and bent so as to form an arch at top, nearly resembled those ancient cells.

“The third island is called Innis-ni-Broe, or Quern Island, from its round form, a ‘quern’ being a small kind of mill-stone, about two feet diameter, and five or six inches deep, like an earthen pan, within which they place another stone pretty equal at the edge to that hollow, and as flat, about three or four inches thick; and in the centre of it is a pretty large round hole, which goes quite through, whereby to convey the oats between the stones; there are also other holes to put in a stick to turn it round till they have finished the operation. I have been the more explicit on this matter, as many have never heard of this kind of mill, which is very common in both Scotland and Ireland.” [I believe it would be a difficult matter, in 1845, to find a quern in familiar use in Ireland, whatever it might have been ninety years ago.] “This island lies at no great distance from the second, before mentioned, and about four miles from the Great Blasket.

“The fourth island is called Innis-Tuskart, or Inishuigh, i. e. ‘the Northern Island.’ It is above an Irish mile in length, and hath no buildings on it except one of the cells before mentioned, it being not inhabited.

“Near the Great Island are three small ones; the first is called Beg-Innis, i. e. ‘the Little Island,’ which is a very fertile spot, consisting of about sixteen acres, that will fatten thirteen bullocks every summer; the grass is mostly clover and cinque-foil, and is constantly enriched by the spray of the sea, which always leaves a considerable quantity of salt behind it. The other two are used likewise to fatten cattle, but they are smaller.

“Four miles W. N. W. from the Great Island is a high stupendous rock, on the side of which rises a smaller pyramid, not quite so high. In the spring season this rock is covered with an infinite number of sea-fowl, which breed upon it; and great numbers are hatched upon the other isles, which are

“destroyed by the country people, chiefly for their feathers, of which they collect several hundred weight during the months of April, May, and June. Most of these islands are stocked with sheep and black cattle; the latter are very difficult to be landed on them, being generally carried in when about a year old, and on some of the isles they grow so wild, that their owners hunt them down, and are obliged to kill them before they can carry them off. The hides, flesh, and tallow sufficiently pay for their pasture, for as these islands are not inhabited, no profit can be made of their milk. All of them are well stocked with rabbits, which have scarce any other enemies than the hawks and eagles, and these devour great numbers of them. The hawks of this coast are remarkably good, and were formerly in much esteem; those of the islands are accounted better than the falcons that are bred on the continent, because they are always on the wing, and constantly fly over to the mainland in search of prey. They seldom kill sea-fowl, nor will they feed on their flesh, except they be kept long fasting. There is a small bird said to be peculiar to these isles, called by the Irish *gourder*, the English name for which I am at a loss for, nor do I find it mentioned by naturalists. It is somewhat larger than a sparrow; the feathers of the back are dark, and those of the belly are white; the bill is straight, short and thick; and it is web-footed. When they are first taken, the country people affirm that they cast up about a tea-spoonful of a very foetid oil out of their bills; they are almost one lump of fat, when roasted of a most delicious taste, and are reckoned to exceed an ortolan, for which reason the gentry call them the ‘Irish ortolan;’ these birds are worthy of being transmitted a great way to market; for ortolans, it is well known, are brought from France to supply the markets of London.”

You will say this letter is all made up of extracts,—if it give you the information you desire, in better words than my own, are you to find fault with it? If your cook, being in an agreeable frame of mind, furnish you with a dish wholesome and

savoury, what matters it to you by what receipt she compounds it, or whether it be composed of French or Irish ortolans, or seasoned with home-grown or foreign spices?

With this simile, worthy of Apicius, I take my leave of you, most simple and temperate of human creatures!

Ever yours.

LETTER VI.

An Excursion—Splendid Equipage—Legend of St. Brandon—Curious Architectural Remains—St. Brandon's House—The greatest Cow that ever was seen—An Inquisitive Old Lady—Aboriginal Edifice—Smith's description of it—Gallerus Castle.

Dingle, August.

My Dear S—

To-day we arose blithe and gay, determined to conquer our fate, and fortunately the weather promised to become our ally; so, under the guidance of the inimitable "Bailly junior," we set off upon an outside car, newly painted, or, better to say, lamp-blacked, which stained our clothes and soiled our gloves. Surely such painting was never equalled, save by that choice spirit, Jack Robinson of Kilkee. The horse was quite in keeping, a poor forlorn looking creature. However, as we were determined to look only through rose-coloured glasses, "all went merry as a marriage-bell." Our drive lay through a bleak mountain region, not very interesting, unless to sportsmen, until we reached a height which afforded us a splendid view on either side. Behind, beyond the harbour's mouth lay Valencia, and more to the east the Iveragh range, in all their broken outline, laved by the ocean. Before us, towards the north, were Smerwick Bay, with the lofty cliffs that form its barrier, Sybil Head, and "the Black Point,"—black enough, and far higher than Baltard. We were on the summit of one hill, with hills all around, save where their openings permitted those two glimpses behind and before; the uncertain weather rendering the distant highlands peculiarly distinct and clear, while the passing clouds, varied by the brilliant sunshine, gave to those near us an indescribable grace and beauty. Our object

to-day was not entirely to pay homage to Nature, though in the heart of her lovely works, but to visit the ruins of the wonderful church of Kilmelkedar, which we were solemnly assured "was built in one night by holy angels." One evening, ever so many ages ago, the sun, when he set in those wilds, saw no place dedicated to the worship of the Creator: he rose the following morning, and smiled upon a perfect chapel, with pillared niche and carved saint, and holy fount, and massy cross! all ready for the purposes of prayer and sacrifice! A matin-call rang loud and clear over lofty mountain and lonely glen, to summon the devout and arouse the unthinking, where no vesper strain could sound the evening before; all gleamed proud and fair in the glad light, and the heart of man became purified, as the sacred bell called him to prayer! And this was the reward of the unceasing prayers of the holy Saint Brandon! Such is the legend; and such, I really believe, the belief of the people who dwell in these solitudes.

This ruin is not only very interesting, but a fine specimen of ancient architecture, whether Saxon or Gothic I am not qualified to say. The entrance is a perfect rounded arch, with rich carving of heads, flowers, and foliage, which is not very much injured by time or climate. The cross was blown down by a storm, and now stands at the head of a simple unknown grave. The eastern window is small, but the upright shafts are quite perfect, and they say it possesses a charm to cure lumbago. A saint, who was suffering from this complaint, passed through this window, by which exertion he lost his pain; whereupon he left his blessing and this soothing power to it. Any person thus afflicted, who goes three times between the centre shaft of the window and the left side, saying his prayers each time, will have his back-ache cured, and what is more, will never suffer from it again. Only a slender person can avail himself of this privilege. A large old cross, shaped something like the Maltese cross, stands in the churchyard nearly opposite the door of the church, but at some distance from it. It does not appear to belong to any particular grave, and

although as large as those with the round heads, that we have seen in some old churchyards, it is not like them.

There are also very ancient tombstones with inscriptions—a sealed book to unlearned eyes. One is shown as having defied the wisdom and skill of many who endeavoured to translate it. It is engraven upon the edge of the stone instead of the flat surface, whether in Ogham characters or not I cannot say.

The inner aisle of the church is very richly carved and pillared. Between those pillars were niches, I suppose; but now they are built in, like tablets for monumental purposes, but with inferior skill and materials. A stone chalice and a broken baptismal font are shown, the latter as being never empty, always containing water even in the driest weather; and if any unhallowed hand dares to empty it, it becomes instantly filled again, like the widow's cruse. Who would venture to evince a doubt of the truth by trying the experiment? Not I, in good sooth, particularly as there has been already a fearful penalty paid by one audacious meddler. A tradesman came hither for one of the polished stones in the inner arched entrance, and endeavoured to take it away for a sharpening stone; his arm became helpless and dead on the spot, and in nine days afterwards he died. In fact, there is no end to the legends about this marvellous building, which was erected in one night by the servants of the Lamp of Faith performing a more enduring work than Aladdin's slaves of the Lamp of Fancy were able to accomplish. And yet the Arabian Nights may survive the last stone of this decaying temple. Another ancient building called Saint Brandon's House stands near; it has a curious circular recess within, (perhaps intended for a staircase,) and round-arched windows. As there are traces of several other buildings, I judge this place contained a colony of monks; and well they knew what they were about, when they fixed on this retirement; for, beside its real advantages, it commands a most lovely view of Smerwick Harbour, The Sisters, and Sybil Head. They need not want for fish in the

refectory on days of abstinence. It is situated in a sheltered recess of the mountains, fine springs around, and, another popular legend bearing witness, in the centre of what was once good grazing and tillage ground. A cow is the subject of this legend—a cow of size and breed suited to provide milk for the giant race of those days. We saw the milk vessels, and if she filled them morning and evening, she was indeed a marvellous cow. In a huge flat rock were these milk pans; six large round holes, regular in their distances from each other, and nearly of equal size; they could each contain some gallons of liquid. This said cow gave sufficient milk for one whole parish; and was the property of a widow—her only wealth. ‘Another parish and another clan desired to be possessed of this prize; so a marauder, endued with superior strength and courage, drove her off one moonlight night. The widow followed wailing, and he jeered her and cursed her as he proceeded. The cow suddenly stopped; in vain the thief strove to drive her on; she could neither go on, nor yet return; she stuck fast. At length, aroused by the widow’s cries, her neighbours arrived, and the delinquent endeavoured to escape. In vain—for he too stuck fast in the opposite rock; he was taken and killed. The cow then returned to her own home, and continued to contribute her share towards making the parish like Canaan, “a land flowing with milk and honey.” The prints of her hoofs, where the bees made their nests, are still to be seen in one rock; and those of the marauder’s foot and hand in another, where he was held fast by a stronger bond than that of conscience. There is a Protestant school for the children of “the Soupers,” as the converts are called, close to Saint Brandon’s dwelling; as I took shelter there from a shower, an old woman approached me, looked very inquisitively at my face and dress, took my gown in her hand, felt it, examined it carefully, then inspected the petticoat, and turned away. She could not speak a word of English. I felt very awkward while undergoing the inspection, for I could not speak a word of Irish.

Now, dearest S. I come to the most wonderful of all the

wonders we saw during this day's excursion. It is a long low building, constructed of stones without any mortar ; at a distance it looked like a "turf clamp " in a bog. It is broad at the base, and gradually narrows, until the breadth of one stone, about a foot wide, closes the roof in. When I say one stone, I mean in breadth, for as the building is of an oblong form, it takes many of these, but so dove-tailed into one-another, that no drop of rain can enter the apartment beneath. We did not measure the building, but I am sure it is eighteen feet long, and about ten wide ; the walls are of a great thickness ; there is one deep window, arched, slanting inward, more open within than without. This window is exactly opposite the doorway, which is about five feet high, and there is no other aperture whatever. I have been thus minute in my description, because these struck me as being the most remarkable relics of former days I had ever beheld ; and I had never heard of them, or, if I did, I had never realized them to my mental vision.

There are two such buildings hereabouts ; and William tells me they are supposed to be the first stone buildings erected in Ireland, and that they are similar to the first habitations in every nation. Our guide gave us an additional insight into the object for which they were erected, by devoutly assuring us that they were "armitages where saints and holy men lived, "and gave themselves quite up to God!" I believe he was right, for I cannot conceive for what other purpose than that of hermitages they could be used. Alas ! though dark, damp, and dismal, they are in reality better dwellings than the miserable mud cabins which are to be seen in this part of Ireland. Judge if all my thirst for antiquarian lore was not whetted by the inspection of these most interesting buildings, whose birth belongs to the earliest times, puzzling the wise like the Round Towers, and coeval with if not prior to them. I have given you my own impression of them, and I now extract from Smith his more accurate account, as one upon which you can entirely depend:—"Not far from Gallerus is one of the curious stone

“ cells already mentioned, which is entirely perfect. The door is five feet high, and about two and a-half feet broad, placed in one end of the building; and at the other end is a small neat window, the sides and bottom of which consist of only one stone, extremely well cut, with hardly any mark of the tool upon it. The room is about twenty feet long by ten broad, and twenty feet high on the outside, to the top of the arch; and the walls are about four feet thick. The whole is so neatly joined within side, that it would be very difficult to put the point of a knife between any of the stones, which are dove-tailed for the most part into one another, and placed without the least particle of any kind of mortar; the side walls incline together from the bottom to the top, forming a kind of parabolic curve. It seems difficult to determine how these buildings were erected, as most of our modern vaults and arches were either built with cement or hewn out of the solid rock. Some think that a heap of earth was first raised in the form of the inside of the cell, and that they built over it, and wedged in the key-stones at the top, over which are a range of loose stones laid like a ridge; and the structure being thus finished, they carried out all the earth by the door; and lastly smoothed the wall on the inside with chisels, &c. The stone is a brown freestone, brought from the cliffs of the sea shore, which cuts readily and is very durable.”

Well may he say it is “durable,” since ages have passed since the erection of these edifices, and no record remains of their uses or purposes,—buried in the lapse of time, or living only in the vague lore of tradition. What does Mr. Petrie say of them? I long to see.

“ This oratory, which is wholly built of the green stone of the district, is externally twenty-three feet long by ten broad, and is sixteen feet high on the outside to the apex of the pyramid. The doorway, which is placed, as is usual in all our ancient churches, in its west-end wall, is five feet seven inches high, two feet four inches wide at the base, and one foot nine inches at the top; and the walls are four feet in thickness

As we wound our weary way to the mountain's top on our return, we called at Gallerus. Gallerus Castle is a fine old Norman ruin, in good preservation as to outward appearance. It was built by the Fitzgeralds, Knights of Kerry. There is here a large fresh water lake, to which the wild swans sometimes come, but rarely. The South of Ireland is seldom visited by these beautiful birds, but they are frequently seen in the North, in the winter season. The road home was rendered still more dreary by the heavy showers, and by the horrible stories of murders and accidents in those desolate wilds.

Now, have I not told you enough, in this letter, of old stories to gratify the strongest love for the marvellous? But I must not close my sheet, without confessing that besides the tradition that ascribes the building of Kilmalkedar to the holy angels, there is another, I fear more probable, though far less poetical, which gives the credit of its erection to the Spaniards, who formerly erected many churches in this neighbourhood. If this be unhappily the case, it is but fair to admit that the charming old ruin is a lasting monument of the refined taste and religious feeling of these proud descendants of the Goths.

at the base. It is lighted by a single window in its east side, and each of the gables was terminated by small stone crosses, only the sockets of which now remain.

“That these oratories,—though not, as Dr. Smith supposes, the first edifices of stone that were erected in Ireland,—were the first erected for Christian uses, is, I think, extremely probable; and I am strongly inclined to believe that they may be even more ancient than the period assigned for the conversion of the Irish generally by their great apostle Patrick. I should state, in proof of this antiquity, that adjacent to each of these oratories may be seen the remains of the circular stone houses, which were the habitations of the founders; and, what is of more importance, that their graves are marked by upright pillar-stones, sometimes bearing inscriptions in the Ogham character, as found on monuments presumed to be pagan, and in other instances, as at the oratory of Gallerus, with an inscription in the Græco-Roman or Byzantine character of the fourth or fifth century.”—*Petrie's Round Towers*, p. 133.

Have I aught else to say? We are a week, a whole blessed week in dirty Dingle! and this day is the only redeeming one we have spent in it. Where shall we be this day week? If living, I shall be, for one, in heart and spirit with you, for with Byron I may say

“ My spirit soars o’er mount and main,
“ And mourns in search of thine !”

Adieu !

LETTER VII.

Relentings towards Dingle—A feat of Fion-ma-Coul's men on their way to the Battle of Ventry—Rathanane Castle—The Sailor's Grave—Bally-Ferritur—Ferritur's Castle demolished by a gale from the Atlantic—The Three Sisters—Glorious Prospect from Sybil Head—A Port in a Storm—Dearmid's Bed—Fort-del-Ore and its Legend—Innis Tuskar—Shipwreck of "Our Lady of the Rosary," a Vessel of the Spanish Armada—Scraps of Knowledge.

Dingle.

My dear S——

AND did I say "dirty Dingle!" and did I regret our sojourn here? Ungrateful that I am, thus placed within the reach of so much pure enjoyment, I must have been in a horrid bad humour. How often in the winter, and in tamer scenes, will this romantic little town, seated on her sloping hills, and by her rushing stream, be pictured in my "mind's eye," and refresh my imagination with recollections of nature's sublime handywork! Poverty and filth will not then mar the lustre of the picture, for, thanks to the wise ordering of our gracious Creator, we forget the evil and remember the good.

To-day I am all fresh from a most interesting excursion, and while the impression is vivid I must transfer it to you. Somewhat better appointed than on our last day, we proceeded to Ventry and Ferritur's Cove. Our horse was apparently in better condition, but lazy beyond all influence of whip or chirrup; while our car kept its balance only by one of the party sitting in the middle of it, and having his legs dangling down behind; yet Bailly gravely insisted it was worth an increased price, for the sake of its "dacency," it being a private

turn out, and "very gintee!" Slowly we crept up hill, and slowly we descended. However, as our desire was to see, it was well the pace afforded us leisure for so doing. On our way we passed several tall upright masses of rock, scattered perpendicularly here and there, in the fields near the road. These were stones which some of Fion-ma-Coul's labourers were carrying for "a build" in the neighbourhood, and upon hearing the war-cry from the Battle of Ventry, they stuck them down and hastened to the fray. Aye, stuck them down like nine-pins! although they are rocks as large as those with which the Cromlechs are built! Truly our present race are men of degenerate days, compared with those who amused themselves with "throwing hills about like quoits." When we came to Ventry, we acknowledged its strand was well suited for a battle plain for such giants. It is fully three miles long, firm, flat, and extensive; its shores curving boldly in from the sea, and its sands bright and clear. It now looked peaceful and lovely under the summer sun, the lazy waves creeping gently in, and swaying the canoes and fishing boats on their tranquil waters, seeming as if its peace was never broken by a louder cry than that of the curlew, or the sea-gull's plaintive wail. Mount Eagle and Maran's Reeks enclose this basin at one side, and on the other, on high ground rising from the shore, Ventry village and church, which must look well from the sea, although the church has no steeple, which is a pity. The clergyman's house and the school add to the dignity of this little place, which is better built and more cleanly than the neighbouring villages. I should think Ventry would be well suited for sea-bathers, as the strand is smooth, safe, and sheltered. Bailly said there are lodges being built here. As we ascended the side of Maran's Reeks from Ventry, we passed Rathanane Castle, a most picturesque ruin, seated in the centre of a moated mound. It seemed to me the Norman noble had chosen an old Danish "fort" or "rath" for the site of his abode; and where erst the Danes had assembled their councils of war, the Normans afterwards held their revels high;

and now, in a later day, it is the haunt of the most timid of God's creatures, for

"Leverets pass the wardless gate,
Where heroes once essayed and perished!"

while the birds of the air and the winds of Heaven alone disturb its deep silence. It is indeed a singularly beautiful ruin, thus placed in the former Danish intrenchment, backed by mountains, and looking down upon the sea. The ancients had fine taste. This castle belongs to the Knight of Kerry.

After winding round the hill, Smerwick harbour lay before us; I should think an unsafe one, for there are sand banks here and there, which divide it from Ferritur's creek, and in high tides these are entirely covered. We passed another ruined castle, but so completely a ruin that little more than the foundations are left; perhaps it was one of those forts which were formerly within hail of each other along the coast; it is now surrounded by a hamlet of hovels. Indeed the dwellings of the poor in Kerry surpass in wretchedness those of any other county I have visited in Ireland. Between this and the sea, pretty far inland, lies a long ledge of sharp pointed rocks, which justifies the opinion that shifting sands have changed the position of these waters, as the beds of rivers are altered. These rocks, situated as they are now, with meadow and grazing ground all around, have a very extraordinary and peculiar effect. Nearer to the mouth of the cove is a little church, very small and much decayed, where in one long, long grave are laid sixteen sailors, who met with their death on this terrible iron-bound coast. We soon passed Bally-Ferritur, with its neat church and its school-house, and I am sorry to add, with its shabby, neglected chapel. I love to see all places of worship kept in respectful order and repair. Then we arrived at Ballyouter, which is close under Sybil Head; from hence a point of land runs out to sea, green and fertile, and ends in a high, abrupt, rocky point, near which stood, within the last six weeks, Ferritur's Castle; but a tremendous western gale lately made sad havoc with the old fortalice, and it is now a heap of stones,

and of mortar as firm and hard as stone. The people regret it very much, and declare that its fall portends some direful calamity to the neighbourhood.

On we climbed to Sybil Head, and were well repaid for the toilsome ascent. This is the loftiest of a range of stately headlands, called the Three Sisters, which form tremendous precipices on the side towards the ocean. These cliffs are not so high as those of Moher, nor so stern in their grandeur; they are clothed with lichens, tall grass, and ferns, the hardy and beautiful Flora of this mountain region; the stratum is also of a different formation, and therefore does not present the same iron-black appearance as the Titanic rampart of Clare. Yet the Three Sisters are beautiful, and so alike, that they appear to have been cast in the one mould; more sorrowful than stern, as they stand warning the mariner off the dangerous coast. Our view was really sublime, as we sate on the extreme western point of Europe, which as a fact was in itself exciting. Westward spread the great Atlantic—and a very little southward lay the Blasket Islands in their giant might, breasting those waters, and frowning defiance to their power. The Skelligs loomed in the far distance, like spectres shrouded in the mist. Close on the north, Dunourlin Head, and behind it the huge Saint Brandon, towering above all his brethren. On the east, or rather south-east, Mount Eagle and Maran's pointed Reeks; the whole panorama grand and wild beyond all description! Long, long shall we retain the impression of this scene, rendered still more forcible by the peculiar manner in which the frequent showers affected it. Huge mists, apparently rising out of the sea, swathed the Blaskets and hid them from our eyes; then suddenly stalked on, ghost-like, over the inland mountains, and left the islands bathed in the brilliant gleams of sun-light, which quickly followed these solemn shadows, and gave to the rugged cliffs a smiling aspect, rendering the sparkling sea more intensely lovely. Sometimes we could not discern even the adjoining cliffs, and then again our eyes could trace, peering through the mist, the hoary head of the Sybil

with her white coif and uplifted hands. Oh ! how I wish I could convey to you any idea of this glorious landscape ; but alas ! I am not gifted with a pen of fire.

We were very loth to leave, but the rain at length forced us, and we could not blame the weather which had afforded us such an intense and unusual gratification ; but being completely wetted, we had to tax the hospitality of a widowed lady who lived beneath the Head. When was ever Irish hospitality taxed in vain ? We were most kindly received, dried, warmed, and comforted. The lady is a native of these parts, and told us much of the Rice family, to which she is related, and how Mount Eagle, from which the title is taken, formerly belonged to them ; but a late Mr. Rice exchanged it and other possessions in Kerry, for lands in the county Limerick, bordering on the Shannon. She also told us how the late Lord Ventry had cut down all the woods at Burnham ; and when I remarked that this must have given him but little trouble, the place was so bleak, she said it was not always so, for that formerly there was a great deal of wood ; and beside sacrificing that to the axe, he caused large plantations of larch and fir to be transplanted, and headed them. He headed larch and fir in his profound ignorance ! What would not his successor give for them now ?

On the last of the Sisters, the most northerly point is " Diarmid's bed," called in Irish, " Ben-Diar-mota." Diarmid was the sentinel who kept watch and ward for night and day, on this look-out, during the continuance of the strife on Ventry strand. No wonder for the place to bear his name ; if the cold winds of ocean greeted him duly there, during the space of a twelvemonth and a day, it was only fair that tradition should secure him this small tribute for such unconquerable vigilance and fidelity.

We were also told of the remains of a Spanish fort being on the other promontory of Smerwick harbour, called " Fort-del-ore," where was fought the last battle of the Irish against the Saxons, and where they had to resign their power to the invader ; so said our Irish informant. But another record states

that here the Spanish troops made a stand against the English, and that Sir Walter Raleigh was one of the commanders of the Queen's troops. The point is called Dunourlin Head. We were informed that the Spaniards, (or Irish, for there is an evident confusion in those legends,) buried the Pope's consecrated banner and vessels near this place. It is certain that some treasures and corslets of pure gold were discovered near a small chapel, erected by the Spaniards about a mile from Fort-del-ore. Some of them are in Lord Ventry's possession.

I have heard that Innis-tuskar, the most northerly of the Blaskets, is extremely beautiful in a striking variety of aspects, being a bold, high rocky cliff on the side exposed to the Atlantic, and on the other a fine verdant island, fertile and green to the water's edge; this cannot be seen from the mainland, being concealed by an intervening island. The Great Blasket, opposite to Sybil Head, is said by tradition to have been formerly attached to the continent, and the country people shew an old ditch which they say is continued at Dunmore. The sound between this island and the mainland is of great depth, and the currents of both ebb and flow set through it with prodigious force and rapidity. Blasket Sound, even in our day of improved seamanship, is of anxious and dangerous navigation. In Sept. 1588, there was wrecked here a ship called "Our Lady of the Rosary," of 1000 tons, one of the Spanish Armada. In this vessel were five hundred persons, whereof one hundred were gentlemen. But one person, the pilot's son, was saved, and this pilot was a Spaniard. "The chief on board was the Prince of Ascule, who was about twenty years of age, a slender man of reasonable stature, his hair brown, stroked upwards, a high forehead, very little beard, marked, pale-faced, with some little red on his cheeks. He had on a suit of white satin when he was drowned, his doublet and breeches cut after the Spanish mode, with russet silk stockings." From a note in Smith's History of Kerry, I give you these graphic particulars of the antique bridegroom trim in which this gallant prince went down, a prey to

the wild waters of the Atlantic. There are two or three Protestant settlements on the Blasket Islands, as well as on the mainland. On our way home, we noticed some curious round buildings of stone, said by the people to be relics of old times, which are now generally used for pig-styes ; they would each hold at least twenty pigs, and are similar in masonry to the hermitages. We also remarked large hamlets scattered on the sides of the mountains and in the bogs, which are scarcely distinguishable at a distance from the heath and turf, being built of mud and without a vestige of whitewash, and only betraying by their smoke that they are intended for human habitations. It being market day in Dingle, we met many returning to their mountain homes, after their day's traffic and communion with their kind, some riding single and some double ; their usual saddle was a straw mat laid on the back of the horse, sometimes tied on by a hay rope round the horse's belly, and sometimes not tied at all ; sometimes ridden with a bridle and sometimes without, and never with stirrups ; thus they jogged along, both men and women. The horses hereabouts, though small, are strong and sure footed. The mules and jennets, of which there are many, are beautiful animals, larger than those with us, and sometimes their delicate limbs are striped like those of a zebra. The cows are ugly, not genuine Kerry, and the pigs are frightful. It would be a blessing to the country to have an improved race of swine introduced.

If I were writing for a hundred years, I could not describe the overpowering beauty of the prospects we beheld to-day ; where land and sea and sky contributes each its share to the colouring and the adornment, and each improves the effect and the sublimity of the other ! So " silence best befits me ! " Fare you well !

LETTER VIII.

Evening Prospect near Dingle—Nancy Brown's Parlour—Two Scriptural Similes—The Holy Stone of Dingle—Manners and Customs of the Natives—Denis of Dingle—John Gilpin beaten hollow by a Kerry Cavalier—Contrast between the Condition of the English and the Irish Peasantry—The Author's Loyalty to the Land of Potatoes.

Dingle.

My dear S——

William took me a most charming walk yesterday, along the cliffs over the harbour, to a high point which affords from its summit a view of the whole of Dingle Bay on the one side, with Valentia and the Skelligs in the distance, shadowy in the evening mists and tinted by the declining sun; on the other, Mount Eagle and his brother mountains rising in empurpled gloom against the western sky, while Dingle, nestled in her hills, lay at the head of the harbour, her pretty church-tower just peeping above the trees, with which imagination might play whatever tricks she pleased, giving it "a local habitation and a name" of her own. It was a glowing evening, such as we have found very rare in this land of clouds, and the whole panorama of mountains and sea looked after their very best fashion; several fishing boats, gliding out to their nightly toil, added a living interest to the scene. As we did not know the name of this point, we called it "Merlin Cliff;" and the lovely little cove near, with its fairy well, and group of children dancing on its firm bright strand, we named "Elfin Cove." How vexed I was with my companion for throwing pence amongst them, thereby awakening sordid passions, and disturbing the harmony of their innocent amusement! On our return, we found we had been close to a place renowned for

the traces of hoar antiquity, and in our ignorance had passed it by. In "Nancy Brown's Parlour" are rocks upon which are engraven sacred words in the Ogham character. The next day, the two gentlemen set out in quest of the fair lady's sitting room and of its mystical lore; they could make nothing definite out of some tracing on the rocks, save that it did not resemble the Ogham writing. Perhaps the writer was no accomplished scribe, but a poor priest, old and ill-taught, who carved with feeble fingers some holy words in this lone and mighty temple.

I suppose I possess a large organ of inhabitiveness, for I regret leaving Dingle notwithstanding its drawbacks, and would willingly prolong our fortnight into a month, if we had a private lodge and sea-bathing; but to be thus in deep water, vainly trying to cast anchor, is tiresome. We saw a bill up in one window, and applied—the house was engaged; we went to another—the same reply; at another which particularly caught our fancy, for it was ornamented with an enormous hydrangia in profuse blossom, the answer was, "Yes, it would be set, if the master did not marry;" but it was suspected that he would be wedded in a few days. Of course we could not interfere with matrimonial arrangements, lest the bride, even in her bridal days, should become a "Mrs. Caudle,"—and with some reason. Our party are so tired of Dingle, that we must leave—indeed it is no marvel that they should be, for our parlour is small, and our attendants and attendance are not very cleanly; but the beds are comfortable. Upstairs, there is a drawing-room and chambers on the same floor; at present they are occupied by English-folk; when they leave, if we survive them here, we are to get possession. The lady above is a botanist, and I wanted William to introduce himself as a brother of the craft, but in vain. We are truly like the dove seeking rest for her weary wing, or like the Israelites in search of the land of promise.

My only comfort is, I have seen so much of our native island that is new and intensely interesting, that it is a positive gain to my patriotic feelings.

As this will be one of our last days in Dingle, I must wind up with a final account of it. On one side of the principal street there is a large stone, "the holy stone of Dingle." Tradition says that Saint Patrick placed it there to contain holy water, until the adjacent church, which was being built, should be completed. That chapel is entirely gone—no trace of it left except part of one end wall, while the sacred stone still remains, and still there is the hollow for the blessed water, now only filled from the fountains of the sky.

By dint of the most persevering and most impertinent enquiries, I have become in some degree intimate with the peculiar habits of this primitive people, and remark with sadness the very slight value they place upon any of their possessions—least of all upon their time. For example, it is usual for the tenants to do the season-work on the farms of their landlords, when there is a hurry to put it out of hand; such as the planting and digging of potatoes, reaping, hay-making, drawing home the turf, &c. This is all done without payment, or the expectation of payment; and the labour is not even allowed in the rent. Their pay, when they are paid, is from sixpence to eightpence per day. While the men are thus employed for "the master," the women do their own farming work, and save the turf. No wonder that they become prematurely old; they lead a dreary life of hard work and privations, yet cheered by the blessed consciousness of fulfilling their duty. The ground is rented in a manner, I believe, peculiar to this part of Ireland, not by the acre, but by "the hundred," as it is called, for potato ground. The hundred is one hundred spade-lengths long by eighty or sixty wide, and this is set for ten or twelve shillings, the tenant to provide manure; the bargain lasts only for the crop, like our con-acre. Other land is set for a continuance, at so much for the grass of one or two cows, or as many as are agreed for, the tenant being free to cultivate it as he likes. If a lease be required, he pays a higher rent; so that the power of improvement is taxed on the industrious, and he has to pay a penalty for the desire of making a home for himself

and family ; it seems to be a hard state of things for the poor peasant. All their stock for market use is held in unreasonable contempt as to value. A donkey's whole load of turf, in paniers, which they make with great hardship, and perhaps bring a distance of ten or twelve miles, will sell for fourpence or sixpence at the utmost. Geese are bought for sixpence each, turkeys for ninepence, and a pair of ducks for sixpence. Chickens, provided they are cocks, for one penny each, and sometimes three for twopence. Hens' eggs are their most valuable commodity, as the hucksters and pedlars buy them for the Cork exportation; therefore they rear the hen chickens, while, if far from a market, they wring the heads off the cocks, and throw them on the dunghill, as being not worth rearing ! Beef is but twopence or twopence halfpenny per pound; mutton is higher, threepence or threepence halfpenny, and is of better quality. Milk and butter are not so cheap in proportion, on account of the Cork butter-buyers. They live very independent of money ; they make their own frieze, flannel, linen, and stuff, and dye them bright colours with native dyes extracted from the roots and leaves of plants and grasses. Sheep being here in abundance, wool is cheap, and they grow their own flax very successfully ; while peeled rushes dipped in grease afford them light. Their great luxury, which is esteemed beyond any other, is tobacco. A bit of prime tobacco will purchase more gratitude than thrice the worth of it in money. As for good will, good nature, and ready obligingness, they are the growth of the soil, and abound every where. The men appear to be idle, or else in this season they have little to do ; we have met them strolling into market, two attending one donkey, with sixpennyworth of turf—the whole day's work of two men and the use of the beast forfeited for the sake of sixpence and a gossip in town ! A man will walk ten miles into town for one pennyworth of tobacco, or two pennyworth of fish, and deem his day well spent. It is indeed a sorrowful state of things when time is so little prized ; yet they are well and comfortably clothed from head to heel, and are a strong, active,

open-countenanced, and able-bodied race. As it is uncertain when the labour of the men will be required for the masters' behoof, their wives must see that the provision for their own families is secured; therefore, winter and summer, the whole year round they have to work hard both within and without doors; so that a daughter is as valuable as a son to a poor man's hearth in Kerry. Yet hard as are their privations and labour, they make out time to yield observance to the claims of friendship. We met more than twenty blooming lasses one evening, on the road leading out of town, with saddened countenances under their hooded cloaks, some embracing, others walking with clasped hands; they frankly replied to our questioning, that eight of them were going to America, and the remainder were escorting them part of the way. They were dressed in their holiday garments, and looked very interesting, although their agitated countenances did not suit with their upright figures and free mountain tread.

I should have told you that the peasantry do not live each family on their own spot of ground, as with us, even if the ground be held by lease; but congregate in those hamlets of which I have before spoken, which are always built in a sheltered situation. On the whole, as far as my observations extend, they appear to be a peculiar people hereabouts. I am told their learning is great both in the Irish and in the dead languages, so, as the old adage says that "learning is better than houses and land," perhaps they are possessed of more true wealth than we imagine.

Amongst the curiosities of nature, I omitted to introduce to your notice a poor idiot, who is named "Denis of Dingle." He is possessed of extraordinary strength of body, and is frequently employed to put out loads of manure on potato ground. He will carry as much as a horse, and with as much apparent ease. It is told, that a gentleman who had urgent business in Tralee, and was disappointed of both horse and car, accepted Denis's offer to carry him thither for twopence—a distance of fifteen miles! The gentleman mounted,

and away went Denis up hill and down vale—all alike to Denis. Frequently his rider wished to dismount and relieve him; this Denis never would permit, but held his hands with his mouth, biting them if he attempted to struggle. At length, on coming near the town, the gentleman begged, and prayed, and offered him a guinea, if he would allow him to dismount, and walk into Tralee; but Denis was inexorable, held him fast, and severely bit his hands to intimate his determination of fulfilling his part of the agreement; and at length he bore him, will-he, nill-he, into the town, up to his hotel in triumph, where he set him down, and claimed his twopence: more he did not want, and more he would not take.

This time twelvemonths we were in England, revelling in the soft and verdant wealth of her landscapes, and the rich glory of her waving woods,—her fields divided by hedge-rows, and her plains stretching away to the horizon—a sea of verdure—all speaking of peace, industry, and security! Alas, judge if the contrast between those well-remembered scenes and the terrible and sorrowful poverty of these wastes and wilds does not strike me with a saddening force, akin to envy. How much more melancholy is the difference between the domestic habits and comforts of the two nations! Here, toil, dirt, and hopeless poverty! There, fair remunerative wages allow the peasantry to surround themselves with decent comforts, which a sense of security permits them fully to enjoy. Enter an English labourer's cottage—the small grate with a bright little fire, upon which is the kettle for tea, first strikes your eye; then it wanders on from one comfort to another—luxuries in Ireland—absolute necessities in England; the polished earthenware, the shining tin, the burnished copper, the bed-warmer, the ancient family clock, and the floor sanded in fanciful patterns—all so delicately clean; and above all, the neat dress of the grave matron, as she welcomes you in with a cool air of self-respect, which is of more value than all the rest. Nothing charmed me more than the quiet dignity of the English peasant matron.

I will not picture the frightful contrast. I will only insist that it is not the fault of my country that she is so different—so widely different—so sorrowfully different—so inferior ! What has she been but a conquered nation for ages !—plundered by invaders—a perpetual battle-field from the time of the Danes to her complete subjugation under the English yoke, and even still torn asunder by factions and dissensions !

England may be envied for her wealth, her order, her industry, her peace, and her security—yet, dear, dirty Ireland ! we must ever feel for you, pity you, and love you ; and dearly do I love you, my beautiful country !

LETTER IX.

A welcome Invitation—Arrival at Foildarrig—View from the Windows
—The Strand of Inch—The Kerry Road—Glen Inch—Glenagalt, or
The Madman's Glen—Cahirconrigh—An old Irish Legend.

Foildarrig.

My dearest S——

ALL our anxieties about a residence are put to flight, by the urgent and most hospitable entreaties of Mr. Hickson of Kenmare, to accept of the use of his marine villa, which he offered in such a manner as precluded all possibility of refusal; so, with gratitude for such unmerited kindness from the hand of a stranger, we left Dingle, and arrived here.

Leaving Dingle, we proceeded for about eight miles along the high road to Tralee, which is very interesting, and commands some fine views. From this road we turned off, and accompanied the course of the Annascall on its way to the sea, until, having reached its mouth, we began to ascend a newly made road, skirting the side of a heathy hill and over-looking the sea, until we arrived at this handsome and commodious house. This home, fit for a hermit or poet, wild and sublime beyond all imagining, is built on the most projecting swell of a mountain, whose foot is planted in the vast Atlantic, the voice of whose waters we cannot hear, we are so far above them, hung like a bird's nest in the cliff, midway between sea and sky. As I write, the view from the windows is magnificent. The sea lying before and beneath me, calm and bright, all gleaming in the summer sun, the Iveragh and Drung range opposite, rising bold and abrupt out of its waters, with a disdant glimpse of Valencia. We can trace the line of that never-to-be forgotten road on the Drung mountain, and Glen-

begh, and Rossbegh Point, with their woods and white cottages, and sweet secluded Kells lying close to the shore ; while to the left are M'Gillicuddy's Reeks towering in majesty above all, and adding an indescribable grandeur to this enchanting prospect. The operations of the sea-gull, gannet, and seal, seeking for their food in their lone dominions, afford us amusement, while the jack-daws, the red-legged crows, and the puffins, passing us by fearless and unheeding, are our only intruders. How can my young companions fail of getting strong and healthy in such a home, where while one cheek is fanned by the sea gales, the other is saluted by the mountain breezes ? Yesterday we saw five seals busily employed fishing in the bay. To-day being *Sunday*, they are not exhibiting any tokens of business ; all is solemn, solitary, and sublime ! Annascall is our post town, a little hamlet in a glen, through which runs a rapid stream that well deserves its name of " Anna-schall," the " bright river." Continuing the road which leads to Foildarrig, three miles farther on you come to Inch island, so called, although it is properly an isthmus which juts out into the harbour, separating the water near Castlemaine from the broader part of the harbour. Opposite to Inch is the line of sand hills and beach belonging to Rossbegh Point, and between is a narrow and dangerous pass, which has a hidden barrier of rocks called " the Bar," making the navigation up to the town very difficult and unsafe. Foildarrig and Inch are on the north side of Castlemaine harbour. I would recommend you to get the map, and find us out. Our side of Inch is a fine strand full three miles long, backed by a stretch of high sand-hills, covered with the long sedgy grass such as we used to love at Miltown Malbay, and which makes them look so soft and lovely. The strand is beautiful, very safe for bathing, and has abundance of shells ; the sand is fine, hard, and bright ; the country people draw an immensity of it for manuring their mountain farms, in every variety of vehicle, not excepting bolster cases laid on a donkey's back. Nothing is more common than to meet a mule with a sack of sand thrown across

him, wending his way up those steep roads, evidently bearing a heavy burden. The other side of Inch is flat, and produces a fine short grass, excellent for pasturage. A wild white pea, sea-holly, and yellow ladies' bedstraw grow here; I am told that this latter is very much esteemed by the cows, that they thrive on it, and that it is used instead of rennet for turning milk into cheese. In some parts of England it is called "cheese rennet," and is used in preference to any other kind. The Kerry toad is to be found here. Kerry is the only place in Ireland which harbours this reptile, since Saint Patrick cursed and banished them. More shame to Kerry for so doing!*

We were delighted with the old church at Inch, and its venerable thorn, which is of an immense size, overshadowing many graves, and the ruins of the building whose prime it was planted to adorn. The fine old tree still increases in size and beauty as ages roll by; yet truly is it the beauty of old age, and well may Burns's exquisite simile be applied to it:

"The hawthorn I will pu' wi' its locks of siller gray,
"Where like an aged man it stands at break o' day."

From this interesting little church-yard we drove up Glen Inch, a deep ravine, with a considerable river making its toilsome way through large rocks to the sea. The mountains at each side are so steep and rugged, as scarcely to allow footing for

* Since writing the above, I have learned so much about the Kerry toad, that knowing him better, I esteem him more. He is not the ugly, crawling creature petted by witches and abhorred by bards. He is known to naturalists as the Natter Jack. He differs from the common toad in being prettily marked with a yellow stripe down the back, and—being Irish—he is vivacious, and moves with much celerity. In short, he is a gay little fellow, and I am not ashamed to say that I am no longer ashamed of his birth place or of him. Even if St. Patrick was sent to banish him, he did right not to budge. I honor him the more for not taking the hint. He was true to the land of his birth, and took refuge in the mountain fastnesses—like the Welsh, the Celts, and other persecuted races.

a goat; and so swart and bare, as to deny even such herbage as would serve their easily satisfied appetites, being only clothed with furze, heather, and fern. Yet here, in this harsh soil, the anxious industry of man evidenced itself in the endeavour to procure food and clothing; for between the road and the course of the stream, lay small plots of potatoes and flax among the rocks; and in the very bed of the river, on every little patch left by the subsiding of the waters, and where the channels dividing formed small islands, were potatoes and cabbage gardens, some not eight feet square, some not larger than a small table, and all filled with luxuriant growth. Two or three wretched hovels stood here, whose inhabitants held possession of this waif of Nature's and the storm's bestowing.

We passed through the entire of Glen Inch; the upper end widens into a bleak boggy plain, from which, at first glance, there appears to be no egress, as Cahirconrigh stops up the eastern side, Mellioch and other nameless hills every other; however, the public road from Tralee to Dingle winds through them, which we joined, and went to see Glenagalt or the Madman's Glen, "the place," as our guide sagely assured us, "to which all the mad people in the world would face, if they could get loose." After pursuing for miles our romantic route, we came to the highest part of the road, and turned a hill which completely shut out Glen Inch; and lo! before us lay a lovely valley, sweeping down through noble hills to Brandon Bay. The peak of the mighty Brandon himself ended one ridge of the boundary, while high though less majestic mountains formed the other; and this valley, so rich and fertile, so gay with corn-fields, brown-meadows, potato gardens, and the brilliant green of the flax, so varied and so beautiful in the bright mingling of Nature's skilful industry, was the Madman's Glen! I felt amazed and bewildered, for I had expected to see a gloomy solitude, with horrid crags and savage precipices. Not at all; the finest and richest valley which has greeted my eyes since we entered the Highlands of Kerry, is this—smiling, soft, and lovely! We asked to be shown the

spot where the ghost of a murdered maiden had so terrified two poor travellers, that they were found lying dead the next morning. "And there is the place," said a gentle-voiced and gentle-countenanced woman, "but it was no sperrit kilt them, "it was the cowl'd, and, may-be, the hunger that done it; and "sure it was a bitter cowl'd night, and when one has an empty "stomach, the cowl'd takes a terrible howld on the heart, and "that was what did it, and no sperrit: God be marcfiful to "them!" I could not but love her upright indignation, that it should be said her poor neighbours, innocent of evil, had been assailed and done to death by the visitation of an uneasy if not a sinful spirit. Her plain good sense was also a marvel to meet with, in this land of superstition and unbounded belief in all sorts of legends.

We took our leave of fair Glenagalt, and assuredly if any aspect of external nature could work such a blessed change, the repose, peace, and plenty of this charming valley would restore the unsettled brain of a poor unfortunate.

On our return, when we came again in sight of Cahir-con-righ, "the rock of King Con," or the "Fortress of Con the King," our guide told us a wild and wondrous tale about it; but so confused and so crowded with hard Irish names, that I despaired of ever retaining it: which I regretted, as it was highly romantic. However, I had the good fortune to find it detailed in Smith's History of Kerry. Incomparable Smith! he supplies all my deficiencies. And yet I wish I could retail Shawn-bawn's version. The date of this legend is very ancient, but I cannot make it out exactly.

"Conrigh, the son of Dair, was contemporary with Connor, "king of Ulster. He is said to have been an eminent warrior, "and the captain of a tribe called Deaghda, who resided in "the West of Munster. There were at the same time two "other celebrated clans in Ireland; the first called the cham-pions of the red branch, in the Irish language, 'Curruidhe, "na Croith Ruadhe,' who were under the command of Connor, "king of Ulster; the other resided in Connaught, and their

“ chieftain was called Odioll Fin. Con-righ having intelligence that the followers of Connor, king of Ulster, intended to plunder a rich island near the coast of Scotland, and carry away the governor’s daughter, whose beauty was much celebrated ; he disguised himself, went into Ulster, and in this manner found means to land with the Ulster men in the island. The governor had lodged his daughter, with most of his treasures, in a strong fortress which the Ulster forces had several times attempted to take by storm, and after receiving frequent repulses, began to think of abandoning the enterprise. Con-righ, without discovering who he was, went to the Irish general, and offered him to lead on the troops to another assault, and to storm the fortress, provided he might have his choice of the plunder ; which proposal being readily accepted, Con-righ soon made himself master of the place, and put all the garrison to the sword, and among other booty, brought off the fair Blaniad, daughter to the governor, whom Con-righ, on their return to Ireland, demanded as his reward ; but the general, who had fixed on her for himself, resolved to sacrifice his honour to his love, and forcing away the lady, told Con-righ that he had deceived him by his ambiguous manner of expressing himself, and at the same time offered him any other part of the spoil. Con-righ, for the present, thought fit to dissemble, and wait for some opportunity to carry her off by stealth, which in a little time he effected. The Ulster general, whose name was Congullion, missing his fair captive, began to suspect that no person in the kingdom would have made so daring an attempt but Con-righ, the son of Dair ; and having caused a strict pursuit to be made after him towards Munster, overtook him and the lady at a place called Saloscheid, where Con-righ overcame him in single combat, and tying him neck and heels, cut off his hair with his sword, which was the most ignominious treatment that the conqueror could inflict upon the vanquished ; after which, Con-righ brought his fair prize in a triumphant manner into west Munster. The Irish com-

“ mander, Congullion, retired into the woods of Ulster during
“ a whole year, until his hair was grown, it being the greatest
“ scandal for a soldier to appear in those times without it.
“ When he was fit to be seen in public, he wandered in dis-
“ guise towards Desmond, where he met (near the bank of a
“ rivulet called Fion-glass, in this county) the beautiful Bla-
“ niad, who resided in a strong-hold which was Con-righ’s
“ abode. Upon his discovering himself to her, she confessed a
“ passion for him above all others, and entreated him to believe
“ that it was against her inclination she was separated from
“ him, and requested him to return with sufficient force to
“ deliver her from a man whom she hated. Congullion, with
“ great joy, promised to comply with her request, and, to be
“ able to effect his design, he returned into Ulster to solicit aid
“ from King Connor. Upon his departure, Blaniad persuaded
“ Con-righ, over whom she had a very great influence, to erect
“ a stately palace for his residence, and to employ his soldiery,
“ who were distinguished by the name of ‘Clanna Deagha,’ to
“ collect all the stones of a large size that could be procured for
“ this structure, with a design to have them dispersed all over
“ the country, when Congullion should return. This com-
“ mander being at length arrived, with some trusty followers,
“ lodged themselves in a wood near the seat of Con-righ, and
“ found means to give Blaniad notice of his arrival, who sent
“ him word that she intended to steal Con-righ’s weapons, and
“ put them out of the way; and that when they saw a quantity
“ of milk ran down the stream, which flowed from the fortress
“ towards the wood where they lay, they might begin the at-
“ tack. Congullion, by this assistance, easily got into the fort,
“ killed Con-righ, and carried off his mistress into Ulster, and
“ from thence, they say, this rivulet hath been called Fion-
“ Glasse, i. e. the white brook. The story adds, that Blaniad
“ did not long survive her treachery, for being followed by a
“ poet whom Con-righ retained in his house, as she was one
“ day walking with Congullion on a steep precipice called
“ Rinchine Beara, this poet came up to her as if he intended

“to salute her, and catching her in his arms, he threw himself headlong with her down the precipice; where they both perished.” Was not this Blaniad as fair a cause of mischief as the worthless Helen, who caused the ten years’ wars of Troy? I have in my possession a translation of this tale from the original Irish, but I blush to say that I do not know where to find it.

Dear S. fondly adieu !

LETTER X.

Annascall Lake—Minard Castle—A Gossip in the Wilderness—A Word about Limpets—The Aborigines of Dunquin—Excursion to Connor Hill—Saint Brandon's Well—Magnificent Coast Scenery—Scissors a Substitute for a Switch—Last Day at Foildarrig.

Foildarrig.

My dear S——

Every day's sojourn only adds to our ever new delight, and to the grateful sense we have of Mr. Hickson's polite kindness. This is a most picturesque day, sunny, with occasional showers, and clouds chasing each other over the mountains. The brilliant sea is exhibiting its endless variety of colours, and is dancing and sparkling around the fishing boats sprinkled over its bosom; for the seals have betrayed the information that a shoal of herrings has entered the bay. We have just returned from a walk to Inch strand, where we loitered long on the firm bright beach, and among the lonely sand hills, feasting our eyes on the surrounding scenery. Oh! it is beyond all description! Still, as I cannot have your dear presence to enhance every charm, I must only endeavour to convey to you some faint idea of its rare magnificence, as day by day it unfolds itself more and more upon us. Some days since, we visited Annascall lake, which is buried in those mighty hills. It is a deep blue lake, three miles round, fed by one large stream, by several smaller tributaries, and by its own mysterious fountains. Its surface was ruffled by a smart breeze, and every tiny wave was crested with light, which delighted the fishermen, who were hastening to its shores, and who kindly assisted us over the rude path. It is surrounded by

bleak and barren rocks of stupendous height, through which, at the farthest end, a cataract rushes into its depths. Above us, one mountain, as if rent in twain by some stormy convulsion, rose lofty and rugged. The bare crags, entirely devoid of verdure of any kind, appeared to hang so loosely, that it seemed as if a touch could send the dark grey splinters toppling down upon us; while those opposite to us took the most fantastic forms; one appeared like a ruined castle, with towers and stately keep progressing to decay, "nor lacked they many a banner fair" of wild flowers and ivy. Another so nearly resembled a carefully guarded fortification, with bastions, and curtain wall, &c., that it brought strongly to my mind the models I have seen of Gibraltar. In fact, the admiration of our party was so strongly excited, that we unanimously resolved that many noted places in other countries *could not* exceed the wild beauty of this spot, which is known to so few of our own countrymen. We were driven home by the rain before we were half satisfied. The anglers, who were carrying havoc among the dwellers in the dark blue waters, were not so easily daunted, so we left them alone with the fishes. I omitted noticing in my last letter, the pleasant addition we had gained to our circle in the arrival of a friend of William's, the Baron von W——. But that pleasure was like most other pleasures, for they have both left us on a botanical tour, and we feel very lonely without their cheerful society.

The showery weather does not prevent us from endeavouring to see all that we can, but we could explore much more satisfactorily if the weather favoured us. We visited Minard Castle, which was built, I believe, in Elizabeth's time, by a Knight of Kerry; it is situated close to the sea, in a little cove between this and Dingle harbour. It is now a beautiful ruin, wherefore we owe a debt of everlasting gratitude to old Oliver, that prince of caterers to the raptures of tourists, antiquarians, and lovers of the picturesque in Ireland. The castle faces the mountainous range which ends in Dowlas Head, and Valencia; it is backed by high ground, so that you do not see it from the

land, until close to it. On a rising ground in the vicinity are the remains of a little church, honoured by the possession of a holy well, at which there are "patterns" held twice a year. There are also traces of a Danish fort, so that the neighbourhood is rich in "relics of old decency;" but the Dane, the monk, and the Norman lord who once kept this place astir, have all disappeared, and the patient cows seem at present to have sole possession, as, grazing down the glen, they add to the tranquillity of the whole scene.

We were pleasantly surprised to find that the old water-guard, who showed us the way to the ancient keep, was a Cork man; he knew the H—— family well, and loved and respected the name. He told us many curious stories of Cork people, and was well pleased to spin a yarn about old times. His wife, who was also from Cork, had her reminiscences for my ear, while her spouse discoursed with J—— of his grandfather and uncles. She suffered much from rheumatism, and told me her husband was so healthy he had no feeling for her, he was "a brute," "a savage,"—and yet when he remarked he had been over thirty years in the service, she kindled up, and declared there had never been a complaint of him during the whole of that time. She said this with pride, delight, and affection strongly marked in her countenance, so that her *aside* to me was just a little private matrimonial abuse, in which, perhaps, all wives now and again are privileged to indulge. We could not be much surprised at his not feeling sympathy for his wife's ailments, when he said that he had never had a day's illness, never met with an accident, and never had felt even a headache, during the whole course of a life which must at least have reached 65 years. He told us that in clearing the rubbish out of the castle, they had found a human skeleton of immense proportions, with a large sword beside it; he thinks the man was standing up close against a wall, when the castle was blown up. When they touched it, it crumbled to ashes. He also remarked that he believed the people in those times lived very much upon "bornocks," Anglice, "limpets," for they had

found waggon loads of these shells in one corner, under the rubbish of stones and mortar. Poor feeding for such giants ! Perhaps the castle was besieged, that the defenders had only those shell-fish for food, and that, while they lasted, they held out against the foe till grim hunger carried the day ; for he is more than a match for the stoutest garrison in the world. This is my explanation for these loads of limpets, since I am unable to penetrate through the mists of ages to arrive at the truth. The old lady told me she had reared nine goodly children, and now she is left alone with her hard old man, and a grandchild. She evidently cares little about them all, except one youth who went to sea, and him she fears she shall never see more. " He was her best-beloved of all ! " She says that Dunquin, where they were first stationed, is the wildest place in the whole wide world. The women dress like men, and the men like women indiscriminately. The men wearing petticoats till they are going to be married, when, by hook or crook, the manly toga is provided in which to go before the priest, and to uphold from thenceforth the dignity of the sex ; that they have no law, nor respect for the law ; and if they misbehave, they are so afraid of the priest, that if a rumour reaches them that he is coming, they run away and hide for days in the mountains, living on such berries and roots as they can get, until he leaves the neighbourhood. Thus their guilty consciences inflict most probably a severer penance than their pastor would. Our informant has one daughter married in Dingle, and she says you can get a messenger to run from Dingle to Tralee for a pennyworth of tobacco, a race of twenty-five miles for one penny ! After sitting for two hours with these dwellers in the wilds, and gladdening and refreshing their hearts with gossip of the days of old, we returned home through showers, which, alas ! are frustrating the hopes of the harvest.

The gannets and seals, being busily employed, told us we might expect to see boats in the evening, for the sea-fowl and seals give notice to the fishermen when their prey is at hand ; and sure enough, with the closing day, the sea became studded

with canoes, and with those picturesque, two sailed fishing boats, which I have never seen except on this coast. The scene was very lively, until twilight concealed them for a while; but when the silent moon arose, and trod with "white feet the lulled sea," and Jupiter assisted with his steady light, the boats again became visible, and looked so spectre-like as they crossed the glittering waters, that we could scarcely leave the windows for our beds, to which at length we retired with prayers for the wanderers on the perilous deep. Before morning an awful storm arose, but we were thankful to hear of no accident having occurred.

We had heard so much of Connor Hill, that we were determined not to leave the country without visiting it, so away we went, one promising morning, back again to Dingle. The road goes straight out of the town for about a mile, and then begins to wind through those hills which rise behind it, and which form for it such a lovely back-ground when seen from the sea, or from the high lands at either side of the harbour. Still ascending at the left of the valley, we crept round one mountain after another, at every step new beauties revealing themselves. When we had reached half-way, that part of Dingle Bay which terminates in Castlemaine lay broadly behind us, with its fine outline of mountains; those of Killarney overtopping it proudly, all clear and distinct as if cut out of the sky. A single rock standing near the shore looked like an old castle, now separated from the land, and washed all round by the conquering ocean. The Skelligs and Brey Head appeared in the distance. I thought nothing could exceed the extraordinary grandeur of this landscape, thus bounded in by such sublime objects, while the simple little town with its church tower, seated at the head of its tranquil harbour in the valley below, afforded a peculiar contrast. At length we gained the summit of the road, and oh! what a scene then lay beneath us! There was the full sweep of Brandon Bay lying miles below, and Tralee Bay—and farther on, the mouth of our own princely Shannon, and the familiar Loop Head! There

they lay in the distance, far, far away, while close to us were

“Craggs, knolls, and mounds confusedly hurled,

“The fragments of an earlier world;”

and five dark blue lakes opened their faces to the heavens, cradling their own sweet waters in unbroken sleep! Behind these lakes and that most lonely valley, the great Saint Brandon, the monarch of all the surrounding mountains, lifted his majestic head. On his side, in two deep recesses, we could see that there were two more lakes; and we know that on his summit is an unfathomable well of the purest water, near which still remains the altar of a church erected by this worthy follower of Saint Patrick, to the honour and glory of the Christian faith. Who can look on this stupendous scene, and not feel a reverence for the enthusiasm which suggested to this pious man, to make the highest point of earth he could reach a place for the worship of his Creator? It shows how heavenly thoughts exalt the soul, and make it keenly susceptible to the influences of nature. The Holy Well is too difficult of access for those afflicted with bodily disease, but it is very common for people to promise, that if they are permitted to recover from mental or corporeal trouble, they will take so many rounds of Saint Brandon's Well, and so entreat the saint to be their intercessor. Indeed it is not unusual for friends or relatives to undertake this pilgrimage of propitiation for the sufferers; thus carrying into the practice of this day a custom which prevailed long before the Christian era, as is remarkably instanced in the case of Jephtha's vow. Little tokens, quite valueless, save for the fervor and spirit of devotion which hallows and consecrates any thing, are laid by the altar and the well,—an old rusty nail, a bit of rag, a wooden cup, and very many locks of hair. These Holy Wells are very frequent throughout Ireland, and I only mention this one, as the pilgrimages to it are typical of the ancient custom of making a vow in the time of need, to be fulfilled when the need is past. At others, we meet the maimed, the blind, and the diseased, seeking relief by their prayers and by the present use of the waters. Though these wells are not

now visited by the sensible presence of the healing angel, yet I doubt not the reverence in which they are held had its origin at the Pool of Bethesda.

We clambered up the grey frowning side of that craggy mountain which faces Saint Brandon, and there seated ourselves by a lake as black as night from the overhanging rocks; where cows, goats, and sheep were grazing, as if in mid air, while one false step would precipitate them into the gloomy water below. So dark were these waters, that it seemed strange to see the fishes leaping in them, as if it were a marvel to behold aught living in such a gloomy abyss. Here we waked Echo with our cries, while Brandon sent back the call of his lesser brethren, even though we had but our weak human voices to arouse the mysterious nymph. Most reluctantly we tore ourselves away, and long did we pause on the summit, which gave us on either hand so magnificent a view of ~~all~~ the headlands, from where we stood, to Loop Head in the county of Clare on the one hand; and on the other, all the headlands as far as Valencia, with the lonely Skelligs* breasting the

* The Skelligs have been so often mentioned in these letters, as forming some of the most striking objects in the scenery of this magnificent coast, that I think the reader will be gratified by the following description of them, taken from Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Ireland:—

“The Skelligs are three islands in the parish of Killemlagh, barony of Iveragh, county of Kerry, and province of Munster, the principal of which, or the Great Skellig, is 8 miles (W. N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.) from Bolus Head, and $7\frac{1}{4}$ (W. S. W) from Bray Head, in the island of Valentia. They form a range of lofty and widely detached masses of rock, extending in a west-south-westerly direction from Puffin island, an insulated rock forming the south-western extremity of the coast of Kerry. The first from the coast is a circular rock called the Lemon, which abounds with various kinds of fowl, and has an elevation considerably above high water mark; near it are two smaller rocks, which are dry at half ebb, but have 30 fathoms depth on the north side. About three miles further, in the same direction, is the Middle, or Little Skellig, consisting of a reddish kind of slate rising abruptly from the sea, and frequented by vast numbers of gannets, or Solan geese, and a great variety of other

restless waves of the Atlantic. And then the glorious mountains! The setting sun gave another aspect to my castle rock,

birds; the people of the mainland take these for their feathers, which are valuable as articles of trade, and also for food, which savours of fish, and is eaten on fast days. About a league farther from the shore is the Great Skellig; it is a stupendous mass of slate rock rising majestically from the sea, and at the height of 50 or 60 yards dividing into two pyramidal summits, of which the taller has an elevation of 1500 feet above the high water mark. The middle region of the island forms a plain of about three acres, surrounded by precipitous elevations which overhang the waters that roar around their base; it affords some short but nutritious pasturage, and there are some indistinct traces of former cultivation. This spot, in the earlier ages of Christianity, was selected as a place of religious seclusion; there are still some remains of the abbey of St. Finian, and of the cells of the monks who formerly lived here in the most austere solitude; the chapels or cells are built of stone dovetailed without mortar, and apparently in imitation of Roman architecture, with conical roofs of the same material. In 812, the Danish pirates plundered this little monastery, and the monks, unable to obtain supplies of provisions, died of famine. There are also the remains of two small wells, which with the chapels were dedicated to St. Michael. The island has only two coves in which a landing can be effected; according to Keating and other Irish historians, Iirr, one of the sons of Milesius, attempting to land here, was shipwrecked and buried in the island. Near the summit of the higher cliff is a projecting crag overhanging the sea, at the extremity of which is a rudely carved cross, which it was considered an act of the most determined devotion to kiss, and which appalling task was frequently enjoined as a penance upon pilgrims, who visited the island for that purpose. This monastery became a cell to the abbey of St. Michael at Ballinskelligs bay, subsequently founded for monks of the order of St. Augustine, the ruins of which still form an interesting object on the shores of the mainland. The water at the base of the island is 90 fathoms deep, and abounds with a variety of fish. On the south side are two lighthouses at a distance of 650 feet from each other, distinguished by the names of the Upper and Lower Skellig rock lights; they exhibit fixed bright lights, at an elevation of 173 feet above the level of the sea at high water mark, bearing from each other N. by E. and S. by W., and are so arranged as to answer the purpose of leading lights to vessels sailing either north or south. The erection of these lighthouses has been the means of preventing much loss of life and property; scarcely a winter previously

in Castlemaine harbour, transforming it into a stately ship, with her white sails all set; the high black poop giving it the appearance of one of those Spanish vessels we see in old engravings; so I settled that this must be one of the Armada, which had been enchanted there by a guardian angel of Erin, and turned to stone. A little maiden, who was driving a donkey's cart, amused us by the use she made of her scissors; she employed them as a goad to her beast, and little he seemed to heed the two-fold prongs which were driven into his hide by the relentless young lady, who smiled and sparkled with her flashing black eyes and ivory teeth, while her mother sate in the car, with a massy gold ring on her finger, "of golden brooch and bracelet proud."

We took our newly-come J. H. to visit Annascall lake, but the rain prevented our accompanying him to its shores; so we waited under a sheltering hedge, and he was forced to inspect with but one pair of eyes, which is not the most agreeable mode of beholding scenery, for sympathy is sweet, and needful to enhance all our enjoyments. La Bruyere pronounced a sound truth when he said, "Solitude is charming, but it is necessary to have some one to say to, How charming is Solitude!" A world of meaning is contained in that pithy sentence.

A piper called last evening, and played for us some fine old Irish airs and gatherings. He is not quite blind, but he is a wandering minstrel, lorn and poor.

Our last day at Foildarrig! and the sun is touching Mac Gilli-

elapsed without frequent and fatal shipwrecks, which since their completion have been of rare occurrence. The light-keepers are sometimes cut off from all communication with the mainland for months together, and as there is no supply of wholesome water on the island, they suffer at those times the greatest privations: it requires a perfectly calm day and a very steady and skilful crew to effect a landing on the rock. The rugged sides of the higher peaks present immense masses of a rotten slaty substance, apparently decomposed by the electric fluid, and it is not improbable that there may have been a third peak, destroyed by the same means."

cuddy's Reeks, lighting up the whole range of mountains, and tinting the vapoury mantle that shrouds the distant Valencia. The broad bay is dimpling and sparkling in its beams, and every thing looks bright and charming—like a smile on a countenance which had been darkened by grief or ill-temper. Shall we ever again behold this noble prospect, which has, in our fortnight's sojourn, become so dear and so familiar to our eyes? I leave Foildarrig with a feeling of tender regret, unlike my young companions, who are eager for change, and fancy something still finer is in store ; for youth is ever exclaiming, in its restless energy,

“To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new !”

LETTER XI.

Farewell to Foildarrig—Visit to a Kerry Ornithologist's Museum—A Custom peculiar to Kerry Funerals—Arrival at Cloghereen—Oh that we had come yesterday!—Ponderings on the Enchanting Scenery of Killarney—St. Finian's Oratory, and Facts about St. Finian—A modern Legend of Innisfallen—Laking, Climbing, and Romancing—Lord Kenmare's Private Pleasure Grounds—Farewell to Killarney.

Killarney.

My dearest S—

And I left Foildarrig with a tender regret! Even if I never again tread its heathy hills, gaze upon its broad expanse of mountain-enclosed ocean, or wander enchanted on the strand of Inch, it shall ever be recorded in my memory as one of the most delightful residences in the world, and as an enduring testimony of the true-hearted kindness and hospitality of an Irish gentleman.

We made our parting adieu to our favourite glens as we passed them, Glen *Maire*, Glen *Aine*, and Glen *William*,* and greeted with renewed admiration the aged thorn at Inch, as we proceeded to Lack. We were strongly recommended to call upon Mr. Townsend, by whose house we should pass on our way to Killarney. Mr. Townsend is one of the water-guards stationed at Lack, and he amuses his leisure hours of lonely retirement, by diving into the mysteries of animal creation; he is a natural historian of no mean acquirements, and has a large collection of stuffed birds, preserved by his own skill, amongst which we were delighted to meet the gannet, whose manœuvres had occupied much of our attention, as we had never seen this bird until we came to this coast. Unlike

* Pronounced, *Moirá, Aine, Liecum*,—i. e. Mary, Hannah, William.

the gull and cormorant, he wheels and soars in mid-air until he descries his prey, when he drops down, direct and rapid as the plunge of a stone, into the sea, and rises almost immediately afterwards, laden with his spoils. The people told us they live on the Skellig rocks, and come from thence into this harbour—a long flight for their dinner! The Kerry toads were also in this museum, and were placed in the most laughable and extraordinary positions, representing various characters and occupations. Some as sailors rowing a boat, some as orators, others as listeners; and some even as women carrying smaller ones for babes in their arms; others as beggars soliciting, and the wealthy refusing alms. They all, however, wore a jovial convivial aspect, from the plump round appearance of the bodies, and the small slender legs below. In fact, we spent a most interesting hour in this simple abode, which is dignified by being the home of an industrious genius, and an ardent lover of the works of his Creator. We regretted much we had not made the acquaintance of such an instructive companion on our first arrival in the neighbourhood. Like all other scientific people, Mr. Townsend was very polite and kind, and did not deem our visit an intrusion.

We pursued our route uninterrupted, save by what interfered with many a messenger in the old ballads—a broken bridge,

“ When he came to a broken bridge,

“ He bent his bow, and swam ;”

we did not exactly follow this example, but we had to descend and walk across the perilous arch, while the horses and carriage forded the stream. It was well for our old friend the piper, that we overtook him on his road to Castlemaine, else I do think that with his imperfect sight he would have fallen into the river. At Castlemaine we were once more favoured by a sight of “ the ouldest bridge in all Ireland,” so renowned in story. We met a large funeral, and observed what we never see in our county, the general attenders wearing black crape round their hats. We often noted this custom in Kerry; if it had been in the north of Ireland, we should have thought that they copied

their neighbours, the Scotch ; some of the women also, who were evidently neither mourners nor relatives, wore a black ribbon round the head-gear.

At Miltown we rested our steeds, and walked into Sir W. Godfrey's desmesne, which I have noticed in a previous letter ; from hence we took a different road from that we had travelled to Valencia, but the day was so cold and showery we could see but little of the country ; sometimes we got a glimpse of the gigantic Reeks, appearing above the wreathing clouds, and again all was swathed in mist, so that my young companions could form no conception of the unrivalled glories of Killarney. We met, near Lord Headley's domain, some of "Lady Headley's *rael* Kerry cows ;" they were very short and broad—unlike those at Valencia, except in the saucy horns and countenance. Trees, trees everywhere surrounding us, refreshed our eyes, so long accustomed to bare mountains and rocky shores ; but you have been here, and your memory will revive its luxuriant charms more vividly than my poor powers of description can do. No one who has not seen Killarney can at all imagine its singular loveliness, and no one who has seen it can ever forget it.

There is a splendid Roman Catholic cathedral being built at this side of the town. It commands a magnificent prospect, and, when finished, will form a striking and beautiful object in the landscape.

As our destination was Mr. Roche's hotel at Cloghereen, we passed through Killarney, and were very happy to find William and his friend the Baron ready to receive and welcome us. How cruelly annoyed we were to find we had missed, by one day, being present at a great national event, a dinner given on Innisfallen to Father Matthew, our true patriot. Such a scene was never before witnessed ; the day was fine ; the lakes were alive with boats in their gayest trim, and filled with folk all dressed in their best array, and most smiling aspects. Innisfallen the banquet hall, its verdant sod and stately trees furnished noble decorations ! all was peace and joy, and our moral

regenerator made such a speech as touched all hearts, and betrayed the benevolent workings of his own. A stag-hunt closed the entertainments of the day. Had we known of this festival, nothing short of illness would have prevented our attending it; I confess that we were in some degree comforted when our friends assured us that their enjoyment was much damped by not having us to participate in it; but it is only once in an age that a sight so gratifying to the best feelings of the heart may be witnessed, surrounded by such sublime accompaniments.

The morning after our arrival, we went on the Lower Lake. Silent with deep admiration, we gazed around! intimate as our intercourse with mountain scenery had been for so many weeks, our hearts acknowledged that Killarney surpassed all, for it combines the rich, the soft, and the tender with the sublime. However, since Mrs. S. C. Hall, with the touches of her gifted pen, aided by her sparkling imagination, has so lately done all honour to this enchanting scenery, I cannot do better, if you wish a description of Killarney, than refer you to her graceful pages. Yet, dearest S.—, the impressions made on the soul can only be pourtrayed by those who have experienced them, for

“He best can paint them who has felt them most.”

and those you shall have, for it is those you prize. Judge, then, if my happiness in gazing on those well-remembered scenes with those so dear to me, was not blended with a sorrowful recollection of the beloved friend, now no more, who was one of my companions when first their magnificence opened upon my enchanted eyes! So that, when the majestic Toomies, with their waving woods, and the vast range at either side rose before me, my eyes filled and my heart swelled with the memory of the past. The solemn panorama sunk into my soul, which was impressed less by admiration than by sorrow! However, I strove to conquer my sadness, and to enter into the fresh young feelings of those now with me, who felt an intense and gay delight, such as belongs to youth and innocence. We found Ross island much improved since our day;

walks are made through the grounds, which are kept in English order, and its fine old castle, formerly a residence of the O'Donoghoe, has resumed its ancient dignity, the disfiguring barrack being removed. From thence we sailed to "sweet Innisfallen," the loveliest isle the sun ever smiles upon in his course; and on our watery way we strove to awaken the echoes, but they were sullen and silent. We visited Saint Finian's oratory, which is unroofed and windowless, an almost shapeless ruin since my last visit. This oratory is only part of a very ancient religious house founded by Saint Finian, surnamed "the Leper;" in Irish manuscripts he is uniformly called "Lobhar," the Leper; he flourished about the middle of the sixth century, and was contemporary with Saint Brandon. Beside the abbey at Innisfallen, he founded that called Ard-finian, in the county of Tipperary, and also one at Cluan-more Madoc, in Leinster, where he was buried. Forgive my weakness; you know I have a passion for finding out all I can about old buildings; they possess an indescribable power over my mind—a melancholy charm. Where are the minds that conceived and the hands that erected those memorials?—those restless minds! those busy hands! As we walked round "the isle of beauty," our guide showed us an ancient tomb, telling us a story about it of comparatively recent date, as the actor in it is still living. A steward of the owner of the soil, (we are bound to believe he was not an Irishman,) thought proper to have the island tilled, and set his labourers to turn up the sacred sod. One of them opened this grave. Suddenly he heard a wild mournful cry, and distinctly saw a train of mourners cross the lake from O'Sullivan's Cascade, and come straight towards Innisfallen, train after train, amounting to thousands. The last had not left the mainland, when the first had reached the isle. Three times they went round, uttering their distressful wail, and then disappeared. He left the unhallowed employ, and never set foot on Innisfallen again. Whether this was the tomb of "the last of the Desmonds," who, it is said, was buried here, or one of the Hi-O'Sullivan

Bere, I could not make out. It is believed the whole island was once a church-yard. We went to the Cascade, were shown O'Donoghoe's prison, library, &c., dined at "Glena's wooded shore," and returned to our cheerful and excellent hotel.

The next day we laked again, and the echoes were a little more amiable; still not as much so as they used to be when they were younger. Another day we climbed Turc mountain, and listened to the roar of its waterfall; the views well repaid us for our ascent, which proved somewhat toilsome, although there is a winding path, with frequent resting places and seats, which command glimpses of the fall through the leafy screen of its well-clothed side. The birch, the pine, and the larch, give a softening and finishing grace to this wild and lonely spot. The descent at the other side was still more toilsome, over broken rocks, and through pathless furze, heather, and hurts. At last we reached the foot, wearied, wounded, heated, and panting; and there we found a fair young maiden, who gravely assured us she had got a "bee in her bonnet"—and so she had, for we heard its humming appeal for liberty from the bonnet which she held in her hand. Perhaps some of us shrewdly suspected we had proved ourselves to be in the same predicament, and were thankful we had not broken shins for our escapade.

We were joined by a dear friend from Dublin, and thus reinforced we set out for the Gap of Dunloe, calling on our way to inspect the lowly ruin of Aghadoe, which affords such a charming view. This church was also built by Saint Finian, and there are some curious tombstones here. Not one word am I about to say of the Gap, which, with its horrid crags and inky lakes, oppresses the soul with mingled feelings of terror, awe, and admiration; where the grey and misty Reeks seem as if they were crumbling down to close the gigantic and solemn ravine, and the Purple Mountain lifts its awful head veiled in its ever-shifting shroud—poor Eily O'Connor's stern and solitary home!—Not a word shall I utter; for no words of mine

can be so true and forcible as your own first impressions. The Castle of Dunloe is on the left hand as you enter the Gap ; it is an old fortress built by an O'Sullivan, and destroyed in Cromwell's stormy times. I never was nearer to it than the road.

We saw everything, and in the best manner. Our evening walks in Mucruss demesne were not the least delicious part of our amusement. There we had permission to stray, and it was sweet to saunter in those tranquil shades, admiring the pheasants, and startling the timid hare and rabbit, while the setting sun gleamed on the grass between and beneath the stately trees, and lighted the hoary towers of the abbey—a pleasant and quiet conclusion to our day's active enjoyment.

Mucruss Abbey was formerly called "Irrelagh," that is, "*on the lough*." It was founded by Donald, son of Thady Mac Carty, in the year 1440. It was re-edified in the year 1602, but was soon after suffered to go to decay. The old grave-stones interested me, particularly that of the great Mac Carty More.

One evening my kind friend the Baron, who seems to be ever considering the tastes of others and consulting their wishes, took me to a far humbler little temple. It is seated on a hill near Cloghereen ; it is stone-roofed, of the simplest architecture, and of elder date than the abbey. It has, of course, its legend, which is as follows :—There were three sisters, or sister saints, I am not sure which, who erected each a temple to the living God. This one is Killeagy, or Aggy's Church ; another is Killarney, which is enlarged and rebuilt, but retains some of the original structure, and is the present parish church ; the third is Killagha, and is a complete ruin. Aggy, or Agnes, chose her site with infinite taste, for it commands one of the finest views about Killarney. The lakes—the mountains—Mucruss woods, with the grey summits of the abbey, all lie before it in one beautiful picture—beautiful indeed when seen as we saw it, steeped in the golden light of sunset.

Another of our greatest treats was also procured for us by

the Baron, who, by the magical art of some botanical freemasonry, obtained entrance for us into Lord Kenmare's private pleasure grounds, which are exquisite both for their intrinsic beauty, and for the judicious skill and taste that have developed their capabilities. The new walks give unequalled views to the delighted wanderer, and from the highest point the whole coup d'œil of the lakes and mountains can no where be surpassed. Numbers of labourers are kept in constant employment and preserve the place in exquisite order. Here is one benefit of a resident landlord! We took a farewell sweep of the lakes—our bugles rang loud and clear, and the unseen nymphs returned their call.

“ While Echo starts up from her home in the rock,
And seizes the perishing strain,
And returns the gay summons with shadowy mock,
From mountain to mountain again.”

Adieu !

LETTER XII.

The New Road from Killarney to Kenmare, the Irish Simplon—The Marquess of Lansdowne the Road-making Napoleon of Kerry—The Waterfall of Adrigal the Irish Staubach—The incomparable Killarney versus the matchless Glengariff—Cromwell's Bridge—A Brave Little Brother—Return to Cloghereen—Conclusion.

Killarney, September.

My dear S——

We have just returned from our excursion to Glengariff—bewitching Glengariff! The road from Killarney to Kenmare I had travelled before, and had therefore great enjoyment in refreshing my recollections of its extraordinary beauty. Mountain, wood, and water all combine to make one part of it like fairy land, from which, when you turn your enraptured gaze to the other, you are startled at the exceeding contrast—a wide valley encircled by bare frowning hills, stern and terrific in their aspect, scarcely clothed with the vegetation with which nature generally mantles her rudest works. This I could recall, but I was totally unprepared for the new line of road from Kenmare to Glengariff, the most wonderful proof of the indomitable spirit of man in conquering difficulties that ever came before my observation. Perhaps old Hannibal's vinegar-irrigated passage of the Alps, and Napoleon's road ~~across~~ the Simplon (some say one hero only followed in the steps of the other) are still more marvellous. This road, however, is surprising enough, for it cuts through and dives under mountains, scorning all obstructions, and enabling the traveller to roll on at his ease, where nature with her huge ramparts seems to have intended to preserve an eternal privacy. When we were here before, we had to ride on ponies over a rugged path up an almost perpendicular hill; I recollect

feeling as though I were riding up a wall on one side, and down on the other. No carriage could then travel here except by being borne on the shoulders of men ; now the horses appear to think nothing of the meandering ascent, and proceed without difficulty. The whole line either skirts the sides of enormous hills, or surmounts them ; three tunnels are cut through the solid rocks. About the middle of one of them, which is of considerable extent, the gloom is broken by a glimpse of the sky above, as a large aperture is made to admit light, and to mark the boundary between the counties of Kerry and Cork. Our driver told us that this road was made through the influence of the Marquess of Lansdowne, who not only contributed £2,000 towards the expense, but paid half the cost of the iron suspension bridge over the river at Kenmare. Indeed before we reached Killarney, we were much interested in observing the many excellent roads made through these wildernesses, and also those branching from that one I have been speaking of. These are made at the sole expense of the Marquess, and are kept in fine order—thus facilitating the access of civilization into the most remote wilds, and pioneering the march of the great schoolmasters of this century—the railroads ! We were also much delighted to see plantations on those barren hills, and so judiciously placed, that in a few years they will add much to the beauty of the scenery, scattered as they are amongst craggy knolls and broken heights, and giving an air of comfort to the good slated farm-houses which ornament this newly-opened country. These plantations are all on the Marquess's property, and are furnished from a very fine, large, well-kept nursery close to Kenmare. There is much worthy of notice about Kenmare Bay ; and some old castles excited a wish to visit the surrounding country, but this time we could not accomplish it.

Almost immediately on emerging from the dark pass of the tunnel, we beheld Glengariff lying before us, backed by a region of mountains, one retiring behind another in almost endless succession ; Hungary Hill, the highest of them, rearing

his huge bulk and sulky brow, as if scowling upon his brethren. We were told that in the bosoms of these mountains repose three hundred and sixty-five lakes, one for every day in the year ! The driver pointed out to us the distant fall of Adrigal, which looked like a thread of silver running down the mountain's side ; yet it is really one of the finest cascades in Ireland. It takes its birth from a lake near the summit of Hungary Hill, three thousand feet above the sea, and after dashing down its rocky sides in a succession of falls, it reaches a perpendicular cliff, down which it leaps in one unbroken column of water eight hundred feet high !

I feel that no language can convey the slightest idea of the beauty of Glengariff, which though thus called "the rough Glen," is adorned with the most soothing and tender loveliness. Here, shut out from the rest of the world, one might contented live, contented die ! My heart retains the impression most vividly. Some comparé Killarney with Glengariff, and give a preference to one or the other ; I see no point of resemblance between them, save that both lie folded in the arms of giant mountains ; they are both exquisitely beautiful, but they produce quite a different effect upon the imagination. Glengariff is retired and romantic ; you feel that you would like to roam by that rushing river, and through those untrimmed groves, at any hour of the day, alone or accompanied, equally happy ! Perhaps the dreary wastes through which we pass give a keener relish for the peculiar graces of this incomparable place ; the air of repose and homeliness is fascinating ; one could linger long by that heaving bay, where wood, and stream, and rocky shore equally attract you. I have been here twice, and each time I have wished it were my home. I have never felt the same desire at Killarney, which feels too exciting for a continued residence. Killarney is a full dressed beauty of high degree ; Glengariff, a rustic maiden unconscious of her attractions.

The inn is pleasantly situated at the head of the bay, whose woody shores are reflected in the tranquil waters which flow in

from the parent tides of the far-famed Bantry Bay. To the left are the hills and sloping lawns of Mr. White's domain, called Silver Hall by some, and "the Castle" by others of our informants. To the right are mountains, one above another, some of them bearing their thick groves down to the verge of the water—and beyond are the Ghou! Mountains, Eagle's Rock, Sugar Loaf, and Hungary Hill. I found the inn much enlarged since I was here; but we had the same little parlour opening into a garden full of flowers and bees, and the orchard beyond, with its terrace-like walks upon the hill. We went out in a boat, and saw the boatmen cast their lines in the bay, and we visited "Cromwell's bridge." This is a beautiful and picturesque ruin of three arches, one nearly gone, barely allowing footing for a courageous person to cross; it is covered with ivy, and the brawling river which flows under it is skirted with trees and underwood—all wild and lonesome. The story, for there is ever a story connected with a bridge, is that the country people pulled one down, to prevent the passage of Cromwell and his army. In vain—they forded the rushing river, and Cromwell, who never allowed himself to be outwitted or conquered without exacting his revenge, made these very people rebuild with their own hands the present time-worn structure, his soldiers standing by to enforce his orders. It is a tale well suited to his unbending and haughty character. There are also the ruins of an abbey, of which I could find out no particulars, so this bridge is by far the most interesting relic of past ages in this place. Late in the summer evening we strayed up the road leading to Bantry, and were joined by a little maid who chatted gaily to us. Her discourse turned much upon "ghosts and sperrits," that frequented the course of a waterfall whose voice we could hear in the still evening; when speaking of the Sugar Loaf mountain, she added *Lobhar* to the name, calling it Sugar Loaf Lobhar; by which I suppose there is some religious house on this hill founded by St. Finian. But this is only conjecture. I think I slept in the

same room I occupied during my former visit, but no moon in silvery silence slept on the gentle water—no

“ Glengariff’s moonlight tender,
Bosomed on the heaving bay ;”

but I did not need her aid to recall that time nor these beautiful verses. The next day we visited Mr. White’s desmesne, which commands charming views, and has the advantage of a fine waterfall to enhance its internal beauty ; here we would have loitered long, only our time forbade ; so, provided with a guide to Lord Bantry’s sporting lodge, which is situated up the Glen, we left the Inn. I forget the name of our guide, but I do not forget his short and touching story. He is an orphan of perhaps fourteen years of age, he has two younger sisters, and keeps his late father’s farm, consisting of an acre and a half, at which he and his sisters labour ; and when more is required than they can compass, the neighbours assist the industrious lad gratis. In winter they go to school ; he earns something by being guide, and Lord Bantry grants to him, and to those he accompanies, the privilege of free ingress into his domains.

We found it hard to tear ourselves away from Glengariff, and as we slowly wended our upward way, we turned with fond reverted gaze to take our reluctant leave of this glen of a thousand charms ! We gazed on its luxuriant woods, its fantastic rocks, its embosoming mountains, its own peaceful waters, with Bantry Bay and Whiddy Island beyond. To each and all with a sigh we bade farewell, as we turned the hill which shut out this enchanting prospect.

Our way home through the bleak hills was most cheerless, but at length the Spa, winding its way through sterile plains to the sea, warned us that we were near Kenmare. There we rested, and then set out for Killarney. After a few miles, we were able to admire the deep glens and rugged heights, which, though severe and terrific, possess their own kind of awful magnificence. At length, the woods of Killarney darkening in the twilight came in view, and passing the

Police station, we swept down the hill and through Killarney tunnel, till beneath Turc the overhanging trees made "a palpable obscure," through which, in safety, we reached our Hotel, and our friends who had declined accompanying us, wherefore they are now repenting in sackcloth and ashes. Tomorrow we separate—some to Dublin—some to Cork—and we to our own happy home, thankful and satisfied for all the rare enjoyment we have tasted. So I conclude these letters by quoting Scott's exquisite lines, which I shall very probably find myself involuntarily repeating to my companions tomorrow:—

" Farewell to the land where the clouds love to rest,
" Like the shroud of the dead, on the mountain's cold breast ;
" To the cataract's roar where the eagles reply,
" And the lake her lone bosom expands to the sky."

THE END.

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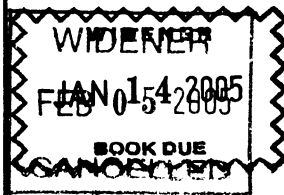


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